

# Graduate Studies Code of Practice

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Introduction to the Graduate Studies Code of Practice .....	3
Glossary.....	4
1. Applications and Admissions.....	5
2. Programme Design, Approval and Periodic Review.....	9
3. Recognition of Prior Learning.....	17
4. Registration of Research Learners.....	19
5. Supervision. ....	24
6. Annual Progression Monitoring. ....	28
7. Confirmation or PhD Candidature and Transfer to the PhD Register.....	33
8. Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s).....	37
9. Professional Doctorate of Business Administration.....	43
10. Complaints, Grievances, Mitigations and Appeals.....	48
Annex 1: Standards and Descriptors for Award at Level 9 and Level 10.....	54
Annex 2: Workflow for development of Research Programme Proposals.....	58
Annex 3: Workflow for completion of annual progression review. ....	59
Annex 4: Guidance for PhD confirmation, or transfer, proposals .....	60
Annex 5: Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s).....	61
Annex 6: PhD by Publication.....	65
Appendix 1: Postgraduate Research Programme.....	72
Appendix 2: Research Programme Proposal .....	75
Appendix 3: Research Programme Proposal (Non-PR).....	77
Appendix 4: Assessment Template for Postgraduate Research Programmes .....	79
Appendix 5: Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form for SETU Research Postgraduate Programme .....	81
Appendix 6: Researcher Development Needs Analysis (rDNA).....	94
Appendix 7: Learner Annual Progression Monitoring Form.....	99
Appendix 8: Progress Report – Independent Review Form SETU .....	103
Appendix 9: Candidature Confirmation Form .....	105
Appendix 10: Intention to Submit for Examination for Postgraduate Research Award Form ...	116
Appendix 11: Independent Chair Report .....	121
Appendix 12: Initial Examiners Report and Recommendation Form .....	123
Appendix 13: Examiners Joint Viva Report and Recommendation Form.....	128

## Introduction to the Graduate Studies Code of Practice

The Code of Practice, hereafter COP, sets forth a framework and the processes by which the *SETU Graduate Studies Regulations* and all other SETU Regulations are operationalised in relation to graduate researchers and within the context of Graduate Studies. As per legislation set forth in *Technological Universities Act 2018*, SETU has the authority to make awards up to Level 9 and Level 10. SETU aspires to act as an engine of change for economic and societal development; education and training of highly skilled graduate researchers enables this transformative goal. The SETU Graduate Studies Office engages with the wider SETU strategies in supporting the growth of research capacity and research-informed teaching approach.

The COP comprises sections covering the entire learner lifecycle from application through to examination. The details set out within are provided to ensure fair and objective processes for all graduate researchers while safeguarding and upholding the quality and standards of degrees awarded by SETU. The COP is aimed at ensuring the GSO can support all Schools, Faculties and Researchers in the delivery of best practice as pertaining to Graduate Studies; and as detailed within both National Frameworks<sup>1</sup> and International Reports and Recommendations<sup>2</sup>. The foundational descriptors for research Masters and PhD study are provided in Annex 1 and guide the design and delivery of all SETU research programmes.

Within the framework of this COP, and specifically §2 of *SETU Graduate Studies Regulations*, Schools/Faculties have the authority to design and all graduate research programmes, and oversee learner progression culminating in dissertation submission and examination. Approval of all graduate research programmes must be sought from Academic Council via Research Committee. Through its activities the GSO will support Schools/Faculties and their researchers while acting as an independent source of advice on best practice and the implementation of the COP. The Head of the GSO reports to the Research Committee and regulations governing Graduate Studies are developed and approved by the Research Committee on behalf of the Academic Council. Schools and Faculties form their own Research Programme Board chaired by the Head of School/Faculty or their nominee these Boards oversee the processes, as approved by Academic Council, governing graduate researchers. Where necessary the Head of GSO can co-chair meetings of the Research Programme Board

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<sup>1</sup> QQI Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes

<sup>2</sup> EUA Solutions The National Framework for Doctoral Education in Ireland: Report on its Implementation by Irish Higher Education Institutions

## Glossary

**Academic Council.** This body is appointed by the Governing Body to assist it in the planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the educational work of SETU. Its principal role is to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the programmes and activities of SETU.

**Governing Body.** This is a statutory body appointed in accordance with the *Technological University Act 2018*. The composition of the Governing Body is provided for in the Act.

**Graduate Studies Office.** Supports Schools/Faculties and their Programme Boards in the delivery of postgraduate research programmes. Aids in the implementation of quality frameworks and ensures that academic standards are maintained. Acts to support both staff and research learners in pursuing best practice in supervision and researcher development, respectively.

**ITC.** Institute of Technology Carlow, a legacy Institute and constituent part of SETU.

**Research Committee.** The Research Committee is a body of the Academic Council responsible for the implementation of SETU Strategic Research goals and overseeing the provision of postgraduate research programmes.

**Research Programme Board.** Functioning at School/Faculty level an RPB is the body charged with the custody, care and development of a programme of research leading to higher degree awards at Level 9 and Level 10 by research and dissertation. Taught level 9 programmes are not within the scope of these document. RPB shall report to the appropriate Head of Department and assist with, implement and review the Research and Development Quality Assurance System.

**Research Examination Board.** Functioning at School/Faculty level and a body of the RPB has the responsibility for monitoring progression, PhD confirmation, and dissertation examination processes.

**SETU.** South-East Technological University, a Technological University formed by the TU Act (2018) with the delegated Authority to award qualifications up to Level 10 (PhD).

**WIT.** Waterford Institute of Technology, a legacy Institute and constituent part of SETU.

## 1. Applications and Admissions

1.1. Fundamental to ensuring the quality of postgraduate research programmes is the maintenance of a rigorous, equitable, and transparent applications and admissions process. Requirements for entry into a postgraduate research programme are equivalent regardless of funding source(s) or background of applicant. The Graduate Studies Office will endeavour to support both academic staff and applicants during the application process. Where suitable applicants seek entry to postgraduate research study the Graduate Studies Office will endeavour to facilitate this.

1.1.2. No applicant may be admitted if the proposed postgraduate programme of research has not been approved by the processes outlined in §2 of the Regulations and the Code of Practice §2

1.1.3. Self-Funded Applicants: Applicants who are seeking entry into a postgraduate research programme are advised to contact a prospective primary supervisor or supervisory panel.

1.1.4. Minimum Academic Requirements

1.1.4.1. The minimum academic requirement for admission to a postgraduate research programme leading to either an award of a Masters or PhD is an award of 2:1 in an Honours Bachelor Degree relevant to the subject matter.

1.1.4.2. SETU will also consider applications for Masters by Research and PhD programmes in respect of individual candidates who normally meet one of the following alternative entry qualifications, subject to the approval of Academic Council:

1.1.4.2.1. Hold a post-graduate Diploma of a recognised institution at, at least, Second Class Honours level, in an area of study cognate to the proposed study area;

1.1.4.2.2. Hold such other qualifications and/or recognised experience as may be acceptable to Academic Council for the purposes of entry to the programme;

1.1.4.2.3. Have passed, with not less than Second Class Honours, an approved postgraduate degree qualifying examination conducted by SETU, prior to the registration and commencement of the Masters by Research or PhD degree programme.

1.1.5. For some programmes, and subject to further specification, the minimum requirement may be higher.

1.1.6. For the purposes of admissions applicant's degree(s), or qualifications, awarded outside of Ireland will be subject to verified to ensure equivalence by a suitably qualified body, e.g. NARIC.

1.2. English Language Requirements

1.2.1. Applicants must be able to demonstrate proficiency in English either through interview or other appropriate means.

1.2.2. Applicants whose primary language is not English will need to provide evidence of competence in both reading and writing.

1.2.3. Applicants whose primary language is not English but whose degree was taught through English must provide certified confirmation that this is correct.

1.2.4 Applicants can also demonstrate their English proficiency by submission of official results from one of the acceptable examinations outlined below in ***Table 1. Minimum English Language Entry Requirements.***

<b>Examining Body/Framework</b>	<b>Engineering, Health Sciences &amp; Science Minimum Standard for PG entry</b>	<b>Business, Education &amp; Humanities Minimum Standard for PG entry</b>
<b>IELTS (Academic) (International English Language Testing System)</b>	6 IELTS	6.5 IELTS (minimum of 6 IELTS in each component)
<b>TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)</b>	iBT 80 CBT 213 PBT 550	iBT 91 (min score of 18 in each component) CBT 232 (min score of 18 in each component) PBT 575 (min score of 55 in each component)
<b>TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication)</b>	660	720
<b>Trinity College London</b>	Trinity GESE 9 or ISE II	Trinity GESE 10 or ISE III
<b>Cambridge Exams (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate)</b>	FCE (Grade B)	FCE (High Grade A) CAE (Score of 58+)
<b>CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference For Languages)</b>	High B2	Low C1

**Table 1. Minimum English Language Entry Requirements.**



### 1.3 Interview Process

1.3.1. All applicants must attend an interview either in person or via an online platform.

1.3.2. The online platform will be decided in advance by SETU and applicants notified accordingly.

1.3.3. Applicants for funded and externally advertised positions will interview and apply via the appropriate Research Support Unit mechanisms as described within advertisement.

1.3.4. Applicants for self-funded positions should expect to meet an interview panel composed of the following: a panel of 3-5 individuals, appropriately gender balanced, containing one member independent of the School/Faculty/Supervision Panel, e.g. this may include a member of staff designated by the Graduate Studies Office.

1.3.5. Following an interview process and where a Research Programme Board seeks to recommend a candidate for invitation to register a minimum of two references will be sought before doing so.

### 1.4. Recognition of Prior Learning

1.4.1. Applicants wishing to make use of prior learning must apply for appropriate recognition of prior learning (RPL) as per §3 of the regulations and §3 of the Code of Practice.

1.4.2. RPL will be considered for admissions purposes only in the context of a Masters by Research programme and not for the purposes of admission to a PhD programme.

## **2. Programme Design, Approval and Periodic Review.**

### 2.1. Design and Approval of Postgraduate Programmes of Research

2.1.1. Schools/Faculties who have successfully completed a periodic review, §2.2 below, have the authority to design and submit for approval a programme of postgraduate research at Level 9 or Level 10. All new programmes of postgraduate research must receive approval via Research Committee and Academic Council.

2.1.2. Supervisory panels must submit to their Research Programme Boards details of the proposed programme of research, the supervisory panel structure, and any details relevant to the required training needs for a learner undertaking this programme (Appendix 2).

2.1.3. Where a proposed programme of postgraduate research has obtained competitive funding subject to external peer-review this should be included in §2.1.2 and §2.1.6 above as evidence of suitability of the programme of research and serves to replace the internal review process.

2.1.4 All postgraduate research programmes must be designed adhering to the following principles:

2.1.5 Postgraduate Research Programme must lead to advancement of knowledge through original research. This advancement must be produced during the period of registration of a learner and cannot include work, or works, produced prior to registration.

2.1.5.1. Postgraduate Research Programme must lead to the development of advanced critical skills.

2.1.5.2 Postgraduate Research Programmes must also meet the following educational objectives:

- Research skills and awareness;
- Ethics and social understanding;
- Communication skills;
- Professional effectiveness/development;
- Team-working and leadership;
- Career management;
- Entrepreneurship and innovation

2.1.6 Supervisory panels from Schools/Faculties that have yet to successfully complete a periodic review of postgraduate research must complete a programme design application (Appendix 3). That provides details of the supervisory panel, a description of a programme of postgraduate research, and identification of SETU staff suitably qualified to conduct annual progression, and if required, transfer assessments.

2.1.7 This document must be provided to the Graduate Studies Office who will co-ordinate a review on behalf of the Schools/Faculties Research Programme Board within four weeks of receipt. Details of assessment criteria as per Appendix 4.

2.1.8. The review will be conducted internally, coordinated by the Graduate Studies Office who shall evaluate the supervisory panel and the identified SETU staff nominated as assessors. Where possible SETU academic staff will be sought to evaluate the suitability of the programme design in terms of achieving a postgraduate award at the indicated level.

2.1.9. A supervisory panel submitting such an application are advised to seek guidance from their own Schools/Faculties Research Programme Board.

2.1.10. The Graduate Studies Office and the Chair of the Research Programme Board will inform the supervisory panel of the outcome of the review with one of the following decisions:

2.1.10.1. Approved for recruitment

2.1.10.2. Approved subject to modification and review

2.1.10.3. Declined

2.1.11. In cases of 2.1.10.2. and 2.1.10.3. the Head of Graduate Studies and the Chair of the Research Programme Board will provide detailed feedback to both the Supervisory panel.

2.1.12. Where the programme has been approved the outcome of the review will be forwarded to the Research Committee for approval, and their decision notified to Academic Council.

## 2.2. Periodic Review of Postgraduate Research Programmes

2.2.1. The aims of the periodic review process are:

2.2.2. To ensure compliance of a School/Faculty with SETU's Regulations for Graduate Studies;

2.2.3. To identify and promote the sharing of good practice;

2.2.4. To consider changes to provision which will enhance the learner experience;

2.2.5. To consider the sustainability of provision within a particular subject area;

2.2.6. To allow Schools/Faculties to design and approve research programmes, independently.

## 2.3. Principles of Review

2.3.1. The Review is intended to be a supportive and useful process, in which conversations take place in meetings between School/Faculty staff and the review panel, usually over a maximum period of two days. Positive reviews will empower the School/Faculty to design and approve postgraduate research programmes.

2.4. The Panel is expected to conduct the review according to the following principles:

- The School/Faculty will be encouraged to raise issues and highlight examples of good practice prior to and during the visit;

- The assistant Head of Department for Graduate Studies associated with the School/Faculty has a role to play in the review, assisting Schools/Faculties in their preparations and to monitor the follow-up of any actions proposed by the review panel;
- The Panel will establish a clear understanding of the overarching nature of the School/Faculty's ethos and work;
- The Panel will acknowledge the standards and quality of provision as evidenced through submitted reports;
- The review will be conducted in a transparent fashion and information used by the Panel will be made available to the School/Faculty;
- The Panel will take account of factors outside the immediate control of the School/Faculty which challenge its ability to sustain or enhance the quality of its provision. Where appropriate, the Panel will highlight these factors in its findings and refer issues for institutional level consideration.

The areas above are an indication of likely areas of interest for a review panel and are not intended to be exhaustive.

## 2.5. Scope of Review

### 2.5.1. The review will cover:

2.5.1.1. The research environment in all its aspects including alignment with research policy and activity and current postgraduate research provision;

2.5.1.2. The management of processes relevant to all postgraduate research learners in the School/Faculty;

2.5.1.3. The experience of learners undertaking Masters by Research and any PhD programmes;

2.5.1.4. Learners' experience of admission, induction, training, supervision, progress monitoring and preparation for examination;

2.5.1.5. Processes for obtaining learner feedback, discussing learners' concerns, seeking their advice on programme developments and informing them of actions taken in response to their concerns;

2.5.1.6. The provision of resources for Learners;

2.5.1.7. The provision of academic and social opportunities for Learners;

2.5.1.8. The provision of information for Learners related to academic and professional expectations;

2.5.1.9. The provision of training and support for supervisors and examiners;

2.5.1.10. Employment for learners following graduation and the support offered to help them find suitable employment.

## 2.6. Review panel.

2.6.1. The Review involves a detailed consideration of material by a Panel, comprising:

- At least two senior SETU academics, e.g. Grade SLII or above, from outside the School/Faculty being reviewed, these should be at the level of Head of Department or above.
- The Head of Graduate Studies, who will act as Chair of the review panel.
- An External Reviewer, with knowledge and experience of postgraduate research provision issues at another institution, and with knowledge of some of the disciplines under review.
- The Registrar, or their nominee.
- The VP for Research, or their nominee.
- At least one SETU postgraduate research Learner, from outside the School/Faculty being reviewed.
- A member of staff from the Graduate Studies Office who will act as Secretary to the panel.

2.6.2. The configuration of the panel will be considered by the Research Committee and approved by Academic Council.

2.6.3. The Head of Graduate Studies is responsible for identifying the members of the panel with approval sought from the VP for Research and the Registrar.

## 2.7. Appointing an External Reviewer

2.7.1. In the first instance, the Head of Graduate Studies may wish to contact the School/Faculty's Chair of the Research Programme Board to aid in identifying an appropriate External Reviewer.

2.7.2. The External Reviewer should be in a senior position with either responsibility for postgraduate research at another third-level institution, or from a discipline area covered in the review. Where possible a candidate should meet both criteria.

2.7.3. They should not have acted as an external examiner for a research programme at SETU within the last five academic years.

2.7.4. When the External Reviewer has been identified, their nomination should be approved by the Registrar and VP for Research, and thereafter formally invited to undertake the role by the Head of Graduate Studies.

## 2.8. Review Documentation

2.8.1. Before the review, the School/Faculty is asked to prepare a submission that the panel should receive no later than three working weeks before the review. The documentation must include a reflective self-evaluation report considering the past five years where appropriate, and relevant supporting documentation. The following information should be provided, although Schools/Faculties may wish to provide additional information, or samples of this type of information, where relevant:

2.8.1.2. A reflective self-evaluation report from the School/Faculty referring to the headings below as a basic structure for the report, and produce a thorough commentary on provision within the School/Faculty. Whilst commenting and reflecting on their provision, Schools/Faculties should also comment on:

- Where weaknesses exist within their provision;
- Areas the School/Faculty is working to improve;
- And the enhancements achieved to date;
- Strengths, or best practice, in the provision of the existing postgraduate research applicable across SETU.

2.8.1.3. The research environment – suitability of the research environment; the interaction of Learners with peers to facilitate the existence of a research community; the suitability of Learner’s topics of research within research group settings; programme profiles for all areas; in the School/Faculty Learner access to equipment and resources; advice on career development.

2.8.1.4. Governance – the research degree committee structure and governance within the School/Faculty; the School/Faculty Research Programme Board.

2.8.1.5. The Admission and Selection of Learners – admission of Learners in line with the Code of Practice for Research; the application and transparency of selection procedures; Sample admissions forms and details of the admissions process for research programmes.

2.8.1.6. Research Training, Transferable Skills Training, and Professional Development – suitability of training to reflect a Learner’s academic needs analysis; assessment of training needs throughout the Learner lifecycle; suitability of research skills training; use of training provided through the SETU Graduate Studies Office.

2.8.1.7. Ethical Considerations – the availability of ethics training for Learners; the existence of a formal channel to consider and determine ethical issues resulting from PGR programmes

2.8.1.8. Supervision – the quality of supervision; the membership of supervisory panels; whether supervisory panels understand and meet the responsibilities outlined in the Code of Practice for Graduate Studies; Learner perception on the quality of supervision; supervisory training; the quality of progress monitoring

2.8.1.9. Progression Monitoring and Confirmation – the effectiveness of progression monitoring process; the effectiveness of the transfer/confirmation assessments

2.8.1.10. Thesis Submission – any issues/feedback identified around the submission of the thesis; the circumstances in which any embargoed, in terms of availability, theses have been approved.

2.8.1.11. Examination – any issues/feedback arising from examiners or Learner outcomes in on the examination process.

2.8.1.12. Learner Feedback and Engagement – the standard and quality of opportunities given to Learners to engage with the School/Faculty to provide feedback on their experience as a learner; Other relevant data on the Postgraduate Research Learner experience.

2.8.1.13. Data on the admission, progression, completion, withdrawal, suspensions, extensions and award of Postgraduate Researchers in the past five years.

2.8.2. This material must be sent to the Review Panel electronically at least three weeks in advance of the review meeting. The Panel may request additional information or clarification up to one week prior to the review.

2.8.3. The External Reviewer will provide a written report at least one week before the event. This will allow other members of the Panel and the School/Faculty to identify lines of enquiry and prepare responses, giving the visit clearer focus.

2.8.4. Schools/Faculties must retain electronic copies of the material.

## 2.9. Review Visit

2.9.1. To allow for a productive and transparent review process the review visit should be scheduled for a minimum of a whole day, allowing sufficient time for discussions among the Panel and with Head of School/Faculty, including administrative staff/Chair of Research Programme Board and Research Examination Boards, Learners, and supervisors.

2.9.2. In meeting with Head of School/Faculty and Chair of Research Programme Board the panel may wish to explore: the alignment of postgraduate research activity with University and School/Faculty research strategy; practical arrangements for managing and monitoring Learner admission, progress and assessment; training and support for supervisors and examiners; the supervisor's role; access to funding and other resources for Learners; areas for development in relation to current research in the University and externally; the research environment and the integration of Learners within it.

2.9.3. In meeting with Learners, the Panel may wish to explore: pre-entry information and the application process; induction; research skills development (including universal and subject-specific provision); understanding of their programme of study and its requirements; the quality of supervision; the assessment process – whether Learners understand what is required, are aware of the assessment criteria; support for Learners with particular problems; opportunities to give feedback individually or as a group including the role of Learner representatives; wider academic and social activities including postgraduate conferences and other opportunities to engage in the wider research activity of the subject area(s)/School/Faculty.

2.9.4. In the meeting with supervisors, the Panel may wish to explore: information and guidance for supervisors; models of supervisor workload management; training for supervisors (both new and established); supervisors' understanding of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Graduate Studies; support offered to Learners; the research environment for Learners and supervisors; supervisors' perceptions of the Learner experience.

2.9.5. All efforts should be made to ensure that the Panel meets with a representative sample of Learners covering all applicable modes of provision and types of programmes (Masters, PhD) as applicable. Part-time Learners and those engaged in distance learning may be consulted by email in advance of the review event and/or by video-conference prior to or during the review. The School/Faculty is responsible for identifying Learners to meet with the panel.

2.9.6. All efforts should be made to ensure that the Panel meets with a sample of at least six supervisors covering, where possible, representatives from each grade and career level, and a range in terms of supervisory experience.

## 2.10. Review Report

2.10.1. The final review report will be prepared with assistance from the secretary to the review panel and a draft version made available to the panel chair within two working weeks. Once reviewed by the chair, panel members will be able to comment on the draft.

2.10.2. The chair and the secretary to the panel will work with the assistant Head of Department Graduate Studies to ensure the report contains no factual inaccuracies, before a final version of the report is produced.

2.10.3. The report must be approved and signed by all members of the panel before presentation to the Research Committee.

2.10.4. In addition to the above areas, the final review report may comment on:

2.10.4.2. The quality of the experience offered to postgraduate Learners within the School/Faculty;

2.10.4.3. On the School/Faculty's compliance with the SETU Code of Practice for Graduate Studies;

2.10.4.4. Areas of good practice;

2.10.4.5. Make recommendations on enhancements to the School/Faculty;

2.10.4.6. Make recommendations to the University;

2.10.4.7. Make a recommendation as to whether the School/Faculty has continued authority to design and approve Postgraduate Research Programmes.



The review report will be presented to the Research Committee for discussion. Actions recommended in the report will be noted and an action must be presented to the Research Committee with the GSO bearing responsibility for monitoring completion of those items.

### **3. Recognition of Prior Learning**

3.1. RPL is an assessment process by which formal recognition can be ascribed to relevant learning that an applicant may have gained prior to application for entry onto a postgraduate Masters by Research programme of study.

3.2. Prior learning includes both formal and non-formal learning.

3.2.1. Formal learning is gained through completing courses/modules in further/higher education or other certified courses.

3.2.2. Non-formal learning may be attained through work, voluntary activities or private study but for which no certification may have been obtained. It is important to remember that any RPL application must focus on learning attained and not simply, for example, on time spent in a particular post.

3.3. Candidates who wish to apply for registration on a Masters by Research programme at the SETU on the basis of RPL are required to complete application form RP5: Application for a SETU Research Postgraduate Programme Utilising Recognition of Prior Learning (Appendix 5).

3.4. It is highly recommended that such candidates discuss in detail their application with the Head of the relevant Department within SETU, prospective supervisors and/or the Head of Graduate Studies, as appropriate, in advance of submission.

3.5. The RPL process may require candidates to submit to interview or other supplementary evaluation processes as may be determined appropriate by SETUs Academic Council.

3.6. The qualifying examination, which is offered at the discretion of the Academic Council for entry to a Masters by Research or PhD programme, will:

3.6.1. be taken at one sitting within such a time-scale as shall be prescribed by the University;

3.6.2. equate to the final year examination of a Bachelor degree programme in a cognate discipline;

3.6.3. be subject to external examination by an examiner of the cognate discipline approved by Academic Council.

3.7. RPL assessment is independent of the admissions process to determine suitability for entry into a postgraduate research programme. The assessment will be undertaken by academics who are independent of both the applicant and supervisory team.

3.8. All postgraduate RPL applications are assessed by an RPL Review Group charged with making objective, clear and consistent decisions. The assessment criteria include: nature and acceptability of claims and evidence; sufficiency of the evidence; currency of the evidence; authenticity of the evidence. The RPL review group will comprise of the relevant Head of Department or nominee, the Course Leader for the cognate degree, and proposed supervisor.

3.9. The review group will make an academic judgment about the equivalence of the applicants learning to learning gained by the more traditional Honours Bachelor Degree route. They review process aims to ensure that the applicant has a sufficient academic background to cope with the proposed research award.

3.10. Approval of the RPL portfolio, as equivalent to an Honours degree in a cognate discipline, will qualify the applicant for admission. This does not automatically mean that a place will be awarded as there is competition for places and not all qualified applicants can be guaranteed a place. The applicant will be notified of the outcome of their portfolio review and their postgraduate application by the Chair of the Research Programme Board.

## **4. Registration of Research Learners**

### **4.1. Location of Registration.**

4.1.1. To qualify for a higher degree by research, learners must be registered with SETU. The research may be carried out at SETU or at another location subject to the approval of the Graduate Studies Office and relevant School/Faculty Research Programme Board.

4.1.2. The Graduate Studies Office and relevant School/Faculty Research Programme Board must be satisfied that the learner can attend SETU for such periods as are necessary to ensure adequate supervision of the research is provided or that satisfactory arrangements are in place and for completion of necessary training.

### **4.2. Duration of Registration.**

4.2.1. Novelty should be a defining characteristic of work produced towards award of a research degree. Therefore, to help to ensure research outcomes and dissertations retain novelty there a limit on the maximum amount of time a learner can be registered for completion of the research programme. Similarly, to allow learners focus and produce in depth work there is minimum amount of time that a learner must be registered for prior to submission of a dissertation.

4.2.2. Learners registered full-time for a postgraduate programme leading to a Masters award (by research) must be registered for a minimum of 12 months before completion and are allowed no longer than 24 months to complete their programme.

4.2.3. Learners registered full-time for a postgraduate programme leading to a PhD award must be registered for a minimum of 36 months. Learners registered for a PhD award, can be registered for no longer than 48 months.

4.2.4. Upon successful completion of a transfer and confirmation process learners that transfer from the Masters to PhD register shall have their maximum and minimum registration periods calculated from the date of initial registration on the Masters by Research programme. Please see §7 for full details of the transfer/confirmation process and associated timeframe for completion.

4.2.5. Learners registered part-time for a postgraduate programme are nominally expected to be registered for twice the periods expected of full-time learners. Learners on a Masters by Research Programme are expected to register for a minimum duration of 24 months and those on a PhD Research Programme for 72 months.

4.2.6. Learners may apply for a period of deferral during their studies. However, by convention the minimum and maximum registration period will not be adjusted.

4.2.7. Learners are permitted a period of three months, or the part-time equivalent, following expiration of their initial registration period during which they must submit their dissertation. To avail of this period of time a Learner must apply in writing to the Research Committee in writing with the support of their RPB. Applications must include evidence to support the Learner request

along with a detailed timeframe and action to support their submission. If the Research Committee supports the application it will be forwarded to Academic Council for ratification.

#### 4.3. Deferral of Studies

4.3.1. SETU, Supervisors, and the Graduate Studies Office recognizes that circumstances may arise where Learners may be required to defer their studies on a number of grounds.

4.3.2. All Learners are encouraged to discuss such circumstances with their Supervisory Panel, Graduate Studies Office, or the Chair of their Research Programme Board to explore any potential alternatives to deferral of studies.

4.3.3. Learners may wish to defer their research programme prior to commencing their studies or during their studies.

4.3.4. Retrospective application for deferral of studies will not routinely be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances, that can be evidenced, which support the inability of the Learner to apply for a deferral contemporaneously. Learners who are consider themselves eligible under this category are advised to seek guidance from the Graduate Studies Office in the first instance.

4.3.5. Learners can defer for a minimum of one semester up to a maximum cumulative of three semesters, in a consecutive or non-consecutive fashion.

4.3.6. To apply for a deferral a learner must: Procedures for Applying for a Deferral before a semester commences:

4.3.6.1. Apply in writing for a deferral to the Registrar stating reasons for their request and complete the research postgraduate deferral form, Form DA3, available from the Office of the Registrar (Postgraduate Section) and online;

4.3.6.2. The Office of the Registrar (Research Postgraduate Section) presents the completed DA3 form to the next sitting of the Research Committee at which an academic decision is arrived at;

4.3.6.3. If approved, the decision should be presented at the next sitting of the Academic Council;

4.3.6.4. The learner is notified of the outcome in writing by the Office of the Registrar;

4.3.6.5. The Office of the Registrar will also inform the Fees Office. If the learner has applied in advance of their proposed deferral they will not be liable for fees while deferred. Learners may be eligible for a fee credit if less than 50% of a semester has been completed at the time of the approval of their deferral, the fee credit will be applied to any future fees due;

4.3.6.6. Notification of deferrals is sent to the Graduate Studies Office, relevant Head of Department, who will inform the appropriate Research Postgraduate Board, and the International Office and immigration authorities, where relevant.

4.3.7. Where an application for deferral is approved the decision is sent by Academic Affairs to the registration section in the Office of the Registrar. The learner is notified of the decision in writing by the Office of the Registrar and the learner record is amended

4.3.8. Learners who receive a stipend from an external source should contact the Research Support Office to clarify the impact of a deferral on payment of their stipend and if granted a deferral to formally notify an external funder of their deferral.

4.3.9. Learners who successfully apply for a deferral will cease to have access to SETU facilities, e.g. Library and Computer Rooms.

4.3.10. International learners who possess visas linked to active learner registration status should consult the International Office to understand the implications of a deferral on their visa.

#### 4.4. Structure of Research Programme

4.4.1. Learners are expected to engage with all aspects of discipline specific and wider learning opportunities as dictated by the nature of their research programme or the specific requirements of their School/Faculty's Research Programme Board.

4.4.2. In doing so the learner will benefit from a deep engagement with a research question, problem or hypothesis at the frontier of knowledge. Resulting in research outputs that are novel and original.

4.4.3. Learners adhering to specific requirements of their School/Faculty's Structured PhD Pathway will benefit from professional development opportunities and discipline-specific training.

4.4.4. All School/Faculty's engaged in postgraduate research strive to offer a community of learning where a critical mass of researchers, at all career levels, that provides an environment supportive of researchers developing critical analytical skills and individual learner professional development.

4.4.5. The sole central element leading to the award of any PhD is the production and defence of a research dissertation.

4.4.6. To facilitate this SETU operates a Structured PhD programme wherein learners complete Level 9 ECTS credit bearing modules within SETU or at allied Institutes during their research programme.

4.4.7. Learners engaged in a Structured PhD are expected to have obtained 30 ECTS during the course of their research programme. These should be distributed across Universal Pathway and Project Pathway modules.

4.4.7.1. Universal Pathway Modules offer transferable skills to postgraduate researchers and are beneficial to professional development. These aim to prepare learners for careers post-award that may be outside of their own academic discipline.

4.4.7.2. Project Pathway modules are specific to the academic nature of the research programme that a learner is engaged in. These should supplement the academic research being undertaken.

4.4.7.3. Learners are encouraged to have completed 15 ECTS credits before applying for PhD Candidature Confirmation or Transfer to the PhD register, and it is advised that of these ECTS credits 10 are obtained in Universal Pathway Modules.

4.4.7.4. The expectation for Learners, in terms of completed credits, is set out by the supervisory panel and Research Programme Board.

4.4.8. To aid the learner and their supervisory team in selecting appropriate modules the learner should undertake a Researcher Developmental Needs Analysis (rDNA, Appendix 6), that requires the learner to reflect on areas in which that can improve and further develop before identifying opportunities to do so.

4.4.9. The Learner rDNA should be completed and submitted to both the GSO and Research Programme Board when the learner first registers. Thereafter, it should be updated and submitted with Annual Progression and Confirmation and/or Transfer reports.

4.4.10. The Graduate Studies Office will facilitate registration on Universal Pathway Modules and update on an annual basis those modules on offer in a given academic year. Registration and the module catalogue are available online via the GSO.

4.4.11. Completion of the research ethics module is mandatory for all learners registered for a research programme leading to award at either level 9 or level 10. This must be completed within the 12 months of first registering at SETU.

#### 4.5. Development of Modules for a Structured PhD.

4.5.1. Universal Pathway Modules are designed with the EUA Salzburg Principles and the IUA PhD Skills statement as guiding principles.

4.5.2. They should aim to deliver and develop individual Learner attributes in, but not exclusively, research skills and awareness, ethics and social understanding, communication skills, personal effectiveness and development, team-working and leadership, career management, and entrepreneurship and innovation.

4.5.3. Project Pathway Modules can originate from:

4.5.3.1. Level 9 Modules developed within SETU to exclusively support PhD provision in particular discipline areas;

4.5.3.2. Level 9 modules already existing within the SETU module catalogue that are delivered in the context of taught postgraduate programmes;

4.5.3.3. Suitable validated Level 9 modules made available from other Higher Education Institutions or other external sources.

4.5.4. A School/Faculty Programme Board must apply for permission to host and validate a new Structured PhD programme. This can take place as part of the Periodic Review Process, §2. A School/Faculty must demonstrate that it can:

4.5.4.1. Provide a sufficient number of appropriate Project Pathways modules to reasonably allow candidates to have a structured training experience. The final number of modules being dependent on the breadth of research programmes on offer;

4.5.4.2. The School/Faculty has a defined strategy as to the research and scholarly fields they will engage for PhD supervision;

4.5.4.3. The School/Faculty has demonstrable capacity to supervise applicants, both in terms of the volume/quality of potential supervisors and an overall research environment appropriate to the needs of PhD candidates.

4.6. Postgraduate research Learners previously registered with either Institute of Technology Carlow or Waterford Institute of Technology in either a Structured PhD or PhD programme must adhere to previous School/Faculty Programme Board expectations in terms of credit-bearing module completion. Where Learners require clarification, they should seek guidance from the GSO and their own Programme Research Board.



## 5. Supervision.

### 5.1. Principles of Supervision.

Each graduate Learner must have a supervisory panel. The principal aim of the supervisory panel is to participate in formal decision-making with respect to the Learner's academic studies, their progress, providing advice, support, and pastoral care as appropriate. Where appropriate the supervisory panel should escalate problems, if they arise.

### 5.2. Supervision Panel Composition.

5.2.1. The supervisory panel must have a nominated principal supervisor who should be an expert in the field of study as demonstrated by published work or comparable outputs deemed acceptable to the discipline.

5.2.1.1. The principal supervisor shall be a member of SETU academic staff, with a contract of employment extending beyond the normal expected registration period of the candidate

5.2.1.2. The principal supervisor shall be qualified to a level at least equivalent to that of the award being sought.

5.2.1.3. If these conditions are not met, then a supervisory plan must be put in place which satisfies the Chair of the Research Programme Board and the Head of Graduate Studies.

5.2.2. The panel must include at least one academic supervisor, normally the principal supervisor, from the academic School/Faculty in which the Learner is registered.

5.2.3. The remaining members of the supervisory panel are not required to be experts in the field of study but should have research and supervision experience related to the methodology or research question.

5.2.4. The supervisory panel should have no fewer than two and no more than five members in total.

5.2.5. To ensure clarity for all parties there should be a defined and clear role in the work for all members of the supervisory panel. This should be outlined to the Learner as soon as these roles are agreed upon.

5.2.6. In certain cases, where there is a significant requirement that more than one area of expertise be covered, there may be more than one principal supervisor. The supervisors in this instance are referred to as joint principal supervisors and have equal rights and undertake equal responsibilities.

5.2.7. Conflicts of interest amongst members of the Supervision panel, e.g. a substantive relationship must be declared. In circumstances where this arises and the panel consists of the two conflicted supervisors, a third supervisor should be appointed.

### 5.3. New Supervisors

5.3.1. Supervisory panels where the primary supervisor has limited principal supervision experience, i.e. not having supervised a Learner to completion at the level of qualification being sought must include an experienced member of academic staff who will act in a co-supervisory role to the principal supervisor.

5.3.2. All first-time supervisors must attend training on research supervision during, or prior to, the first year of supervising.

5.3.3. All research supervisors are encouraged to attend ongoing internal and external supervisory training opportunities, where appropriate, as part of their professional development. These will be advertised via GSO communication.

5.3.4. Supervisors must have completed, or be in the process of completing, all mandatory training as outlined by HR Policies and Procedures before being eligible to act as a supervisor.

5.3.5. New Supervisors will also be offered the opportunity to obtain mentorship from an experienced Supervisor, in relation to Learner supervision. This individual can be appointed via the GSO, Research Committee, or the School/Faculty Research Programme Board with consideration given to the other commitments of the proposed mentor.

### 5.4. Off-Site/Non-SETU Supervisors

5.4.1. SETU recognises the need to incorporate expertise not always held internally to produce successful postgraduate research programmes.

5.4.2. Where a non-SETU staff member is appointed to a supervisory panel they cannot act as a principal supervisor, this includes honorary staff members.

5.4.3. Honorary Supervisors should be appointed as honorary staff within the School/Faculty where the Learner has their primary association.

### 5.5. Supervision of SETU Staff.

5.5.1. Where SETU staff are enrolled on research degree programmes within SETU, the supervisory panel must include at least one member who is not a SETU staff member. It is highly recommended therefore, that in such cases the supervisory panel includes members from another HEI.

5.5.2. Members of the supervisory panel who hold a line management position in relation to the Learner; representing a conflict of interest, must excuse themselves from supervisory responsibilities. This applies before the SETU staff member is registered as a Learner and for the entire period of registration up to and including completion of the examination.

### 5.6. Roles and Responsibilities of the Supervision Panel.

5.6.1. Each graduate Learner will have a documented supervision meeting with their supervisory panel at least once per month. This does not include group meetings; journal clubs or other fora where postgraduate peers are present.

5.6.2. Where dictated by the nature of the research programme it may be required that one or more supervisor will meet with the Learner on a more regular and frequent basis.

5.6.3. Areas where supervisory panel members should provide oversight on include, but are not limited to:

5.6.3.1. Advising to the Learner on the research question(s) and the nature and quality of the programme of research to be undertaken;

5.6.3.2. Advise to ensure that the Learner acquires training in the methodology of research and scholarship and in the skills necessary for sustained independent effort by advising on their training needs analysis and their professional development, and by giving guidance on the for registration for Structured PhD Modules where appropriate;

5.6.3.3. Receiving regular written submissions as appropriate and to provide constructive evaluation and criticism in reasonable time;

5.6.3.4. Ensuring that the Learner is made aware of any inadequacies in their academic progress relative to that expected and, where necessary, to advise on remedial action for improvement or withdrawal from the programme;

5.6.3.5. Liaising with the external supervisor, where relevant;

5.6.3.6. Participation in the annual progression monitoring process;

5.6.3.7. And advising on the form of presentation of the thesis and its subsequent examination, and advise on correction and revisions following examination.

5.7. Supervision Continuity.

5.7.1. It is the responsibility of the relevant Chair of the Research Programme Board, assisted by the Graduate Studies Office, to ensure that appropriate supervision remains in place in situations where a supervisor leaves SETU.

5.7.2. Where a principal supervisor retires or resigns from SETU during a research programme of study, then the supervisor is encouraged to continue supervising the Learners in their new capacity, but as a secondary supervisor.

5.7.3. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Research Programme Board, assisted by the Graduate Studies Office, to appoint a new principal supervisor in cases where it is necessary under the requirements outlined above and to seek approval from the Research Committee when doing so.

5.7.4. A member of academic staff must decline appointment as a supervisor if they expect not to be able to discharge the responsibilities of supervision in full, or withdraw if circumstances change and they are no longer able to so.

5.7.5. Where a supervisor is absent (e.g. on sabbatical leave) for part of the duration of the Learner's research, it will be the responsibility of the Chair of the Research Programme Board and Head of Graduate Studies to determine whether or not a replacement supervisor is needed for the period in question.

5.7.6. It is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) to ensure a smooth and timely transition where a change of supervisor takes place.

5.7.7. Changes to the composition of the supervisory panel must normally, and where appropriate, be made on the basis of agreement between the supervisor(s), the Learner, the proposed supervisor(s), the Chair of the Programme Research Board, and notified to the Research Committee for approval, before changes are adopted by Registry.

5.7.8. Changes to the composition of the Supervisory panel must occur within the limits of individual School/Faculty Research Programme Boards set out by the periodic review process, §2.

5.8. Complaints and Grievances.

Where difficulties arise within a supervisory/Learner relationship all parties should refer to §10 *Complaints Grievances Mitigations and Appeals*.

## **6. Annual Progression Monitoring.**

6.1. The value of a research degree awarded by SETU is underpinned by the quality of the research produced from postgraduate degree programme. SETU is responsible for ensuring the academic quality and standards of its research degree programmes.

6.1.1. Engagement by all parties with the supervision process, training and development needs of Learners and review activities will ensure successful outcomes in the research programme.

6.1.2. Learners are expected to take stage appropriate ownership and responsibility for their research project and the interactions they have with their Supervisors during the progression monitoring process.

6.1.3. Learners who have completed a Confirmation of PhD candidature or Transfer to PhD register application are not required to undertake the annual progression monitoring within the same academic year.

6.1.4. This section provides the framework by which postgraduate Learners, at either Level 9 or Level 10, and their academic progress is monitored and assessed. It also provides procedures for circumstances that may arise where Learners are not demonstrating satisfactory academic progress.

6.2. Purposes of annual progression monitoring and assessment.

6.2.1. The purpose of the annual progression monitoring is to establish whether or not a Learner's registration should be confirmed or whether alternative action is required.

6.2.2. The annual progression monitoring process provides a means to ensure ethical approval is granted where necessary, and an appropriate research and training plan is in place, and that those plans are executed and updated as necessary.

6.2.3. The annual progression monitoring process recognizes that good academic progress may vary between programmes and within programmes due to the nature of the individual research project.

6.2.4. Discipline specific measures of academic progress will be used to determine if good academic progress is being made.

6.2.5. Is it incumbent upon the learner to establish, with aid from their supervision team, what constitutes discipline specific measures of academic progress and to agree project-specific targets and goals that can be reviewed during the progression monitoring process.

6.2.6. A timeline for completion of the process is outlined in Annex 3.

6.3. External Reporting.

6.3.1. Postgraduate researchers supported through externally funded or commissioned research projects may be required to provide periodic update reports to the funder or funding body/agency. The supervisory team, with support from the research support unit at the University, can assist in this task.

6.3.2. Where postgraduate Learners need to directly report on their progress to a funding agency, it is best practice to ensure that the supervisor team is given oversight of this report in advance of submission.

6.3.3. Any requirement(s) for external reporting, where it exists, does not supersede SETU requirements for engagement with the annual progression monitoring process.

6.4. Participants and their responsibilities.

6.4.1. Learner

The learner has a proactive role in the progression monitoring process, by triggering this on an annual basis with the submission of the Learner Annual Progression Monitoring form (Appendix 7) describing their progress in the last academic year. The learner may be required to attend the Research Examination Board to present their work.

6.4.2. Supervision Team

The supervision team are responsible for providing an annual report on the Learner's progress. At least one member of the supervision team must attend the Research Examination Board, where the Learners' progress is being assessed. They must also provide guidance to the learner on discipline-specific goals and targets by which progress can be assessed.

6.4.3. Graduate Studies Office

The Graduate Studies Office, and Head of Graduate Studies, is responsible for coordinating the collection of, and transfer of, progression reports from the Learner and Supervisor. The GSO plays an advisory role in interpreting the regulations and code of practice and advising the Research Examination Board on best practice. Where necessary the GSO will act as co-chair for the School/Faculty's Research Examination Board. The GSO facilitates access for the REB to relevant documentation prior to the REB. The GSO actions relevant feedback from the REB.

6.4.4. School/Faculty Research Examination Board

The School/Faculty Research Examination Board serves to ensure that each learner is making sufficient academic progress as judged by individual discipline areas and within the context of cohorts of Learners within Schools/Faculties and across stages of study. The Chair of the Research Examination Board shall assign a member of the REB who is independent to the learner to review the submitted learner and supervisor progression reports prior to the REB meeting.

6.4.5. Research Committee

The Research Committee will receive the recommendations of the REB and approve, if appropriate, any changes to the Learner's status. They will subsequently notify Academic Council and the Registrar of these changes.

## 6.5. Progression Monitoring

6.5.1. The Graduate Studies Office will collate results relating to learners' Universal PhD Pathway modules and provide this to the relevant Research Examination Board in advance of their meetings.

6.5.2. Research Examination Board will be convened by the School/Faculty and assisted in this by the GSO as required. and will forward completed Learner Progression/Supervisor Progression Report forms to members of the Research Examination Board in advance of that meeting.

6.5.3. In advance of meeting the Chair of the REB will nominate a member of the REB to review the two reports relevant to an individual learner in advance of the REB meeting. Where possible, and while remaining appropriate, the same member of the REB should review learner progress on a yearly basis to provide consistency.

6.5.4. The reviewer will submit a recommendation (Appendix 8) on the Learner's progress before the REB is convened, and where possible attend the REB to contribute to discussion.

6.5.5. The Research Examination Board will meet to discuss the progress of their cohort of Learners at least two months before the end of the semester.

6.5.6. Research Examination Boards can optionally require for Learners to give oral presentations on their progress to the board.

6.5.6.1. If present, the learner will be excused from the REB meeting before any discussions on progress commence.

6.5.7. At least one member of the supervision team must attend the discussion on the Learners' progress.

6.5.8. The outcome of this discussion is an assessment of the Learner's progress. Three recommendations are possible:

6.5.8.1. Satisfactory – whereby the REB deems the learner to be making sufficient academic progress to warrant continued registration;

6.5.8.2. Requires Improvement – whereby the REB requires the learner to significantly revise their research and/or training plans with updated deliverables and milestones and submit these for reassessment by the REB;

6.5.8.3. Unsatisfactory – whereby the REB deems the learner not to have made sufficient academic progress to successfully complete their research programme, thus not warranting continued registration for the current research award.

6.5.9. Where an assessment of satisfactory progress is recorded the REB will inform the Learner, the supervision team, the GSO, the Head of the Department/School/Faculty in which the learner is registered. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Research Committee for approval and the Registrar's Office. The candidate will be recorded on the broadsheet as being Eligible to Register for the subsequent academic year.

6.5.10. Where an assessment of requires improvement is recorded the learner will revise and resubmit their PG Progression Report Form, as per 6.5.8.2., at least one month before the end of semester. The supervision team will also submit a revised Supervisor Progression Report form. The GSO will reconvene the REB prior to the end of semester and assess the revised plans within the context of successful completion of research program. At this assessment the REB will determine if a Learner's academic progress is satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If progress is deemed satisfactory then the REB acts as per 6.5.8.1.

6.5.11. Where an assessment of unsatisfactory, 6.5.8.3., is recorded the REB will inform the Learner, the supervision team, the GSO, the Head of the Department in which the learner is registered, and the Registrar's Office. The learner's registration for their current research award will be terminated.

6.5.11.1. If requested by the learner a panel may be convened by the GSO to receive and review a written response by the learner to the REB Assessment. This panel will be composed of:

- Head of Graduate Studies (or nominee), Chair;
- A member of the supervision team;
- Two independent members of the School/Faculty's REB;
- An academic, with postgraduate research supervision experience, from a different School/Faculty within the University.

6.5.11.2. The panel must receive the Learner's response no later than one month before the end of semester, and will convene to meet with the learner within ten days of receiving the Learner's response.

6.5.11.3. At this panel meeting the learner will have an opportunity to present an update on their progress and on any related issues. The learner may choose to be accompanied to this panel meeting by a supporter, for example by a member of the University Learners' Union or of the Research Postgraduates' Forum but not a legal representative.

6.5.11.4. Based upon these discussions the panel will ratify their original decision, 6.5.8.3., or opt to change the decision of the REB to either outcome 6.5.8.1. or 6.5.8.2. If the panel deems 6.5.8.2. to be the new outcome the learner will be required to submit a significantly revised research and/or training plans with updated deliverables and milestones to the GSO by a date specified by the panel.

6.6. Universal PhD and PhD Project Modules and Assessment.



6.6.1. Regulations pertaining to assessment of Universal and Project Pathway PhD modules pertains only to those Learners registered on a structured PhD programme.

6.6.2. The expectations on the number of ECT credits to be obtained by the learner within any given period are set out by the School/Faculty Programme Board and the Supervisory Panel documents in the Developmental Needs Analysis, §4 Registration.

6.6.3. The Research Examination Board does not directly assess learner performance in meeting the assessment criteria associated with of Universal and Project Pathway PhD level 9 modules.

6.6.4. Regulations related to assessment, examination boards, mitigating circumstances, and appeals for these modules are details in SETU Academic Regulations governing Taught Postgraduate Modules.

6.6.5. A candidate must attain the required pass standard in each Universal PhD Pathway and Project Pathway module to obtain the ECT credit attached; there is no facility to pass by compensation in Universal PhD Path and Project Path modules.

6.6.6. Learners who initially fail a Universal PhD Pathway, or Project Pathway, modules will be allowed to re-take the assessments/examinations in that module. Candidates normally may take three repeat opportunities (candidates are permitted four consecutive opportunities to take examinations) before being required to seek, in writing, permission from the Registrar to take further attempts. All Universal PhD Path and Project Path modules must be successfully completed.

6.6.7. In cases where a PhD Track learner has applied for an exemption from a Universal PhD Pathway module or a Project Pathway module, the Research Examination Board will decide on whether the exemption is granted or not, considering the RPL application form, the RPL assessor's report and the views. For a given research postgraduate learner REB's may only grant exemptions for modules up to 10 ECTS.

## 6.7. Appealing Progression Decisions

6.7.1. Learners have the right to appeal decisions made during the progression monitoring process, please refer to §10.

## **7. Confirmation or PhD Candidature and Transfer to the PhD Register.**

7.1.1. Candidates admitted to SETU are initially placed on the register for Masters by Research programme or admitted on a PhD Register Track. No earlier than 12 months after initial registration and no later than 12 months before the expected date of completion of the proposed doctoral programme a candidate must apply to undertake Confirmation of PhD candidature or for transfer to the PhD register.

7.1.2. To be eligible to be apply for confirmation or transfer there is an expectation that learners registered on a structured PhD programme would have:

7.1.2.1. obtained 15 ECTS credits by the time of submission of PhD confirmation documentation.

7.1.2.2. Of which 10 ECTS credits should have been earned from completion of Universal PhD Path modules or an approved equivalent.

7.1.3. ECTS are not assessed during this process for learners who are not registered on a structured PhD programme.

7.1.4. For part-time learners the application process for confirmation, or transfer, should normally be made in year 4 of study, but no earlier than in year 2 of study.

7.1.5. Non-EU Masters by Research candidates should check that their visa and sponsored funding arrangements do not impose any restrictions on transferring to a PhD research programme.

7.1.6. The learner's application is made to the Academic Council using the PhD Candidature Confirmation Form (Appendix 9). The Graduate Studies Office will coordinate the administrative processes and act as Chair of the candidature panel.

7.2.1. The purpose of the confirmation, or transfer, process is to:

7.2.1.1. determine whether the candidate has developed a clearly defined, coherent and feasible research project suitable for award of PhD;

7.2.1.2. assess progress to date and the academic preparedness of the candidate to successfully complete the proposed PhD programme;

7.2.1.3. to elicit feedback from the candidature committee to ensure successful completion;

7.2.1.4. provide an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate the development of their communication skills appropriate to PhD-level study; and

7.2.1.5. publicly acknowledge a major milestone in the project and inform others about the research project.

7.2.2. Successful completion of the confirmation, or transfer, process will assume that there is a continuation of the same programme of study.

7.2.3. Learners successfully transferring from a Masters by Research programme to a PhD programme will have the commencement date of their PhD programme backdated to the date of initial registration as a postgraduate research learner in the SETU.

7.3. Process for Confirmation of PhD Candidature or Transfer to PhD Register.

7.3.1. The candidate for PhD Candidature must inform their Research Programme Board of their intention to apply for confirmation, or transfer, no less than eight weeks before the submission of their application. Guidance on the proposal is provided in Annex 3 but confirmation, or transfer, applications are usually no fewer than 5000 words.

7.3.2. The RPB will inform the Graduate Studies Office who will chair the candidature panel and coordinate the process on behalf of the learner, RPB and Registrar's Office.

7.3.3. The candidature panel will have a minimum composition of:

- I. Head of Graduate Studies, or nominee, acting as chair;
- II. One member of the supervision team;
- III. One independent member of the RPB, nominated by the Chair of the RPB;
- IV. Where the candidate for PhD Candidature is a SETU staff member an external reviewer must be appointed as outlined in §8 of the code of practice.

7.3.4. Where the Chair of the RPB deems it necessary an external examiner may be appointed, as per §8 of the Code of Practice, to the candidature panel under the following conditions:

- I. There are discipline specific requirements that necessitate the presence of an external reviewer;
- II. There is not sufficient independent assessors, within the University, that can offer an assessment of the methodology or the specific subject matter of the Confirmation/Transfer application.

7.3.4.1. Where the inclusion of an external reviewer is proposed details must be supplied on the *Candidature Confirmation Form*, Appendix 8.

7.3.4.2. The appointment of an external reviewer to this role requires approval from the Research Committee and Academic Council.

7.3.5. The GSO is responsible for providing information related to progress or completion of Universal Pathway Modules where required.

7.3.6. The supervision team will provide a statement of no fewer than 500 words on the learner's readiness for confirmation or transfer.

7.3.7. The GSO will coordinate sharing of the learner's application and supervisors' statement with the candidature panel allowing up to four weeks for review.

7.3.8. The GSO will convene the candidature panel to conduct a confirmation, or transfer, meeting where the learner will be required to defend their work and future proposed work.

7.3.9. During the meeting the learner will be asked to make a short, 20-minute presentation, summarizing their current position and future work required for successful PhD completion. This presentation may be open to members of the learner's Department/School/Faculty.

#### 7.4. Recommendations and Result

7.4.1. The candidature panel will make a formal written report containing a clear recommendation to the Research Examination Board and to Academic Council for consideration to either:

7.4.1.1. confirm the PhD candidature or transfer to the PhD register;

7.4.1.2. extend the candidature to a specified date and permit resubmission of the transfer/confirmation proposal;

7.4.1.3. not recommend PhD candidature and if appropriate recommend completion as a Masters by Research degree;

7.4.1.4. not recommend PhD candidature and propose a termination of studies.

7.4.2. The candidature panel will provide a report supporting the above recommendation.

7.4.3. The Research Examination Board will submit to the Research Committee a copy of the candidate's confirmation, or transfer, documentation: the written confirmation proposal; supervisors' statement of support; completed PhD Candidature form as applicable; and, where applicable, the statement of completed training.

7.4.4. The Research Committee will consider PhD Candidature documentation and the panel recommendation, if the Research Committee approves the recommendation Academic Council will be notified.

7.4.5. The Registrar will record the PhD confirmation, or transfer, and notify the learner, the supervisory team and the Head of Department.

7.4.6. The learner has the right to appeal the recommendation of the confirmation committee, following the appeals process outlined in §10 of the Code of Practice.

7.5. Transfer Guidance for Masters by Research Learners registered on or after 1 September 2018 in either ITC or WIT.

7.5.1. Some learners originally registered to complete a Masters by Research on, or after, 1 September 2018, but not on a PhD track, seeking to transfer to a structured PhD programme may not have obtained requisite 15 ECTS to adhere to the above process (§4).

7.5.2. Should the Research Programme Board support this application to transfer they must provide, in writing, to the Research Committee a Development Needs Analysis demonstrating the opportunities available for a learner enabling them to obtain 30 ECTS before dissertation submission, should confirmation/transfer be successful.

7.5.3. Where Research Committee is satisfied with the plan proposed the learner's application for confirmation, transfer, can proceed as outlined above.

#### 7.6. PhD Probationary Status and Confirmation of Candidature

7.6.1. PhD candidates who were registered, prior to 1 September 2018, and were eligible for direct entry, may have been admitted as probationary PhD candidates.

7.6.2. Such candidates are required to make a formal application to their respective Research Programme Board to confirm their PhD candidature by following the processes outlined in Section 2 above.

7.6.3. Normally, such applications should not be made earlier than one year after initial registration and not later than one year before the expected date of completion of the proposed doctoral programme.

#### 7.7. Transfer from Doctoral to Masters by Research Register

7.7.1. Candidates on the Doctoral register who are unable to complete the approved programme within the permitted duration may apply to Academic Council for permission to transfer to the Masters by Research register.

7.7.2. Transfer may also be recommended by the Research Programme Board or, indeed, may be requested by the candidate in cases where anticipated outcomes from the research do not match the anticipated volume or standard.

7.7.3. Additional circumstances, including for example illness or external factors, may necessitate PhD to Masters by Research transfer.

7.7.4. Applications to transfer from the Doctoral to the Masters by Research Register should be made in writing to the Chair of the Research Committee by means of a Notification of Changes form, who will consider the application and notify Academic Council of the outcome.

7.7.5. Conditions related to duration of the Masters Research programme will be made in individual cases of transfer.

## 8. Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s).

### 8.1. Introduction

8.1.1. Upon completion of a research program all Learners registered on either the Research Masters or PhD research register must present for examination a dissertation or other portfolio of work representing the outputs of their research program in an examinable format (Annex 4). The assessment of a candidate's dissertation and work must be rigorous and fair; and conducted by individuals with relevant experience and qualifications.

8.1.2. Readiness to submit a thesis should be dictated by the requirements set out for award at either Level 9 or Level 10 not by those of a specific funder or project.

8.1.3. Both the Masters by Research (level 9) and Doctor of Philosophy (Level 10) degrees are awarded without classification and successful award is annotated as "Recommended".

### 8.2. General Principles

8.2.1. This policy covers the preparation and submission of a research degree thesis for the purpose of examination only. The specific requirements governing a candidate's depositing of a successfully examined thesis to the SETU Repository are covered by a separate guidance document provided by the SETU Library.

8.2.2. Candidates must submit for examination their dissertation at least two months in advance of the School/Faculty's Examination Board Meeting of the final year of the learner's approved research programme.

8.2.3. Candidates and their supervisor(s) must complete and submit a signed Intention to Submit for Examination for Postgraduate Research Award form (Appendix 10).

8.2.4. In cases of disagreement between a learner and a supervisor as to the appropriateness of submitting the thesis for examination, submission may proceed if both the GSO and Chair of RPB are notified and there is no possibility of resolution. The advice and reasoning of the supervision team must be formally recorded and appended to the Intention to Submit Form after the required signatures have been collected. Where this occurs the GSO must inform the Independent Chair, who must restrict dissemination of this information so as to avoid prejudicing the examination process.

8.2.5. Examination of the research must include an assessment of the written dissertation, or equivalent for both Masters by research and PhD awards. All PhD candidates must undergo a viva voce, Masters by research candidates may be requested to undertake a viva voce if requested by the external examiner.

8.2.6. The written dissertation must represent novel and original work conducted by the candidate presented in a format appropriate for the topic under research. The dissertation must seek to place the candidate's own work in the context of prior work demonstrating an understanding of this context and the implications of the candidate's contribution.

8.2.7. The candidate will be examined on the material that has been submitted and the context within which the research has been conducted. The candidate may not submit further material after initial submission of the dissertation.

8.2.8. The examination procedure is overseen by a SETU academic acting in the role of independent Chair nominated by the RPB.

8.2.9. The candidate must submit three hard bound copies of the final version of the dissertation with the SETU library.

### 8.3 PhD by Publication

8.3.1. Candidates may be eligible to submit for examination by means of PhD by publication.

8.3.2. Candidates must have sought and obtained the approval of their supervisor and the relevant Research Programme Board before pursuing this mode of examination. Guidance on the timing of decision making, the format of a PhD by Publication dissertation, and the examination process are provided in Annex 6.

### 8.4. Selection and Approval of Examiners

8.4.1. Examination must be performed by two examiners, one internal and one external to the SETU.

8.4.2. If the candidate for examination is a SETU staff member than two external examiners must be appointed to perform the examination.

8.4.3. Examination should only be undertaken by those individuals with relevant qualifications and experience and with a clear understanding of the task.

8.4.4. Examiners must be appointed prior to submission of the candidate's dissertation.

8.4.5. Selected examiners must be identified on the Intention to Submit for Examination for Postgraduate Research Award form (Appendix 10).

8.4.6. Examiners must be nominated and their appointment approved by Research Committee and Academic Council.

#### 8.4.6. Internal Examiner

8.4.6.1. The internal examiner must have knowledge of the general area of research and/or the methods used in the dissertation being examined but does not need to be an expert in the specialist research subject.

8.4.6.2. The internal examiner must be a member of academic staff of the SETU.

8.4.6.3. An internal examiner nominated by the supervisor(s) may be from any Department/School/Faculty within the SETU.

8.4.6.4. The internal examiner must be independent of, and possess no conflict of interests in relation to, the candidate, their supervisor(s), and the external examiner.

8.4.6.5. If a suitable internal examiner cannot be identified from within the SETU it is appropriate, with justification to nominate two external examiners.

8.4.6.6. The internal examiner should hold a research degree that is equal or higher to the award being assessed.

#### 8.4.7. External Examiner

8.4.7.1. The external examiner must not be or have been associated, via a substantive post, with the SETU within the 3-year period preceding submission of the candidate's dissertation for examination.

8.4.7.2. The external examiner must not have held a role as an External Examiner at the postgraduate level with SETU in the 3 years prior to nomination.

8.4.7.3. The external examiner must be independent of, and possess no conflict of interests in relation to, the candidate, their supervisor(s), and the internal examiner.

8.4.7.4. The external examiner will be a specialist in the subject area, be known for their contribution to, and be active in the area of the candidate's research.

8.4.7.5. The external examiner should hold a research degree that is equal or higher to the award being assessed.

#### 8.4.8. Appointment and Duties of Independent Chair

8.4.8.1. An independent Chair will be appointed to oversee the conduct of the examination process. The role of the Chair is not to exercise academic judgement of the work submitted for examination but to ensure a fair and robust examination process is followed.

8.4.8.2. The Chair will be nominated by the RPB and approved by the Research Committee.

8.4.8.3. The Chair must have prior experience of examining at the level that is equal to or higher than the award being assessed.

8.4.8.4. The Chair is responsible for ensuring a fair viva voce examination is conducted.

8.4.8.5. The Chair, or their nominee, must provide in writing notice, no fewer than 10 working days in advance, to both the examiners and the candidate of the date, time and location of the viva voce.

8.4.8.6. The Chair must provide a report on the conduct of the examination to the Graduate Studies Office within 7-working days of the date of the examination, a template for this report is provided in Appendix 11.



## 8.5. Examination Procedures

8.5.1. It is expected that the *viva voce* examination will take place within eight working weeks upon receipt of the dissertation by the external examiner.

8.5.2. In the context of a Level 10 award the examiners must prepare and submit initial independent reports no later than one week before the examination (Appendix 12) containing a recommendation prior to the *viva voce* examination.

## 8.6. Purpose and Conduct of the *Viva Voce*

8.6.1. The purpose of a *viva voce*, hereafter *viva*, examination is to assess the work submitted by the candidate. It provides the candidate the opportunity to present and defend their work through high-level debate with experts in the subject. It enables the examiners to confirm that the candidate has a thorough understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects and methods involved in the work and to contextualise their work in the general field of learning.

8.6.2. The candidate's supervisors, may by agreement of both the candidate and the SETU, attend but not participate in the *viva*.

8.6.3. The candidate may be invited to make a short presentation on their research at the commencement of the oral examination.

8.6.4. After completion of the examination the candidate, and supervisors if present, are excused by the Chair to allow for deliberation by the examiners. When the examiners have reached a recommendation, the Chair will invite all parties into the room and inform them of the recommendation being made by the examiners that is subject to final ratification.

8.6.5. The examiners must complete and submit a single joint post-*viva* report (Appendix 13).

8.6.6. The *viva* may not be recorded.

## 8.7. Examiners Reports

8.7.1. Reports to be received during the process of the examination include:

8.7.1.1. Two independent initial reports signed and submitted by each examiner (Appendix 12);

8.7.1.2. A single joint post-*viva* report signed and submitted by both examiners (Appendix 13).

8.7.1.3. A signed and completed post-*viva* Independent Chair report must be submitted to the SETU not more than 7-working days after the *viva* examination has taken place, as per 8.4.8. above.

8.7.1. The joint post-*viva* report will indicate clearly one of the following recommendations:

8.7.1.1. recommended without modification;

8.7.1.2. recommended with minor corrections, completed within 3-months;

8.7.1.3. referred for modification, completed within 6-months;

- 8.7.1.4. referred for substantial amendment and re-examination within 12-months;
- 8.7.1.5. not recommended for award at Level 10 but recommend with corrections award at level 9 within 6-months;
- 8.7.1.6. not recommended for award at either Level 9 or Level 10.
- 8.7.2. In the case of a recommendation of outcome 8.6.2.2. above the modifications can be verified as complete and satisfactory by the internal assessor and for a recommendation of outcome 3. or 4. the dissertation must be re-assessed by both examiners, and a second viva must be conducted in the case of 4. Outcome 5. applies only to those candidates under consideration for award at level 10. Candidates recommended for re-examination may have only one further examination attempt.
- 8.7.3. The period allowed for corrections will commence from the date at which the learner is officially notified of the outcome of their examination.
- 8.7.4. In the case of Masters by Research, a single joint agreed report, countersigned by both examiners, will be submitted by the internal examiner. Indicating a single outcome from 8.7.1.1 – 8.7.1.4. or 8.7.1.6.
- 8.8. Research Examination Board
- 8.8.1. The joint post-viva report shall be forwarded for consideration to the research examination board. Following receipt of the report.
- 8.8.2. The Examination Board Meeting shall then take place; the proceedings of each such Board Meeting to be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Academic Council's Policy and Procedures for Academic Standards and Assessment Regulations.
- 8.8.3. The Examination Board shall consider the recommendations of the examiners in its final determination of results.
- 8.8.4. The recommendation of the Examination Board shall be recorded and forwarded to Research Committee for consideration and to Academic Council for approval.
- 8.9. Extenuating Circumstances and/or Disruption of the Examination Process
- 8.9.1. Please see *Complaints, Grievances, Mitigations and Appeals* regulations (§10) for processes related to extenuating circumstances, or medical circumstances, and or the potential impact of disruption on the examination process in the context of the viva examination.
- 8.9.2. Where a learner believes extenuating circumstances exist they are advised to consult with either the Independent Chair for their viva or the Graduate Studies Office.
- 8.10. Review of external examiner reports
- 8.10.1. On an annual basis external examiner reports pertaining to PhD examinations will be reviewed i) to ensure that SETU procedures relevant to examination of the

dissertation and the *viva voce* are followed and ii) that standards as relates to the award of PhD by SETU are aligned with those across the sector and display academic rigor.

8.10.2. The review will be conducted by a sub-group of academic members of Academic Council at the commencement of the second semester.

8.10.3. The sub-group will report their written findings and any recommendations to Academic Council prior to the end of the academic year in which their review commences.

#### 8.11. Complaints and Appeals

8.11.1. If the candidate wishes to make an appeal against the recommendation of the Examiners in relation to their research examination they should consult the *Complaints, Grievances, Mitigations and Appeals* regulations (§10).

8.11.2. If the candidate has a complaint that does not relate to the examination outcome this must be reported via the *Complaints, Grievances, Mitigations and Appeals* regulations (§10).

## 9. Professional Doctorate of Business Administration.

Learners who register on the Professional Doctorate of Business Administration are postgraduate research learners. Typically, learners are registered in a part-time mode, with learners focussing on the completion of taught modules over the course of the first four or five semesters of the programme, before completing a transfer process and developing their research dissertation over the remainder of the programme.

DBA programme co-ordinator(s) are responsible for the overall management of the programme, ensuring that all key programme interventions and supports, such as workshops and research paper presentations, are in place. The co-ordinators provide a point of contact for DBA candidates on overall programme administration. Programme co-ordinator(s) have a number of responsibilities in relation to the operation of each structured doctorate programme, including programme promotion, learner academic progression, liaison with pastoral care, liaison on academic affairs, examinations and results processing and day-to-day programme management.

Applicants seeking admission to or Learners registered on the DBA are also advised to consult the School/Faculty of Business “DBA Programme Handbook”.

### 9.1. Applications and Admissions

9.1.1. Admission to the DBA is administered by the University’s Admission Office, in conjunction with the School of Business.

9.1.2. Applicants are required to apply online through the Postgraduate Application Centre (PAC) (see <http://www.pac.ie>).

9.1.3. Admission is governed by existing SETU Graduate Studies Regulations (§1) and Code of Practice (§1) in addition to the SETU overarching principles.

9.1.4. Where necessary applicants are required to meet the minimum English Language Requirements set out in the Graduate Studies Code of Practice §1 and establish equivalence of their degree as per Code of Practice §1.

9.1.5. There is an additional minimum entry requirement for all applicants of an MBA or equivalent Masters Degree.

### **PLUS**

9.1.6. A minimum of 5-years management experience, ideally at a senior level.

### 9.2. Programme Structure and Attendance

9.2.1. DBA Candidates are typically registered as part-time learners.

9.2.2. There are three Phases to the DBA, with the transfer to the official Doctoral register (and passage from DBA Phase 1 to DBA Phase 2) being decided before Workshops 5 (of five Workshops) of DBA Phase 1.

9.2.3. The DBA programme has a focus on professional development, trans-disciplinarity, knowledge transfer and the collective honing of advanced conceptual, critical and research skills, attendance at all the scheduled programme events, e.g. workshops, research paper panel presentations, is essential.

9.2.4. The DBA programme is an accumulation of workshop research expertise and professional development, the presentation and examination of research papers and the integration of these with introductory and concluding sections to produce a final thesis for viva voce examination.

9.2.5. The timing of workshops is notified in advance of the programme and it is not possible to operate outside of these arrangements. If there is an individual emergency, the DBA coordinators should be advised in advance of any workshops or paper presentations that might potentially be affected by such emergencies.

9.2.6. Missed workshops or research papers can only be attended at the next cycle of the programme.

9.2.7. Supervisors are appointed in DBA Phase 1, following Workshop 3, and this supervision continues until the end of the DBA programme, i.e. completion of final DBA thesis.

9.2.8. The DBA papers and thesis process is also supported by research supervisor(s). Two supervisors are allocated to each DBA learner and appointment of supervisors external to the University will occur where a DBA candidate is a member of WIT staff.

9.2.9. DBA Supervisors are bound by the same regulations and guidance as outlined in the Graduate Studies Regulations (§5) and Code of Practice (§5).

9.2.10. The supervisors will provide assistance by way of advice on primary and secondary research, proposed plans, structures, and designs throughout DBA Phases 2 and 3. The responsibilities of the supervisors, more specifically, are to:

9.2.10.1. Encourage and occasionally review progress regarding completion of the reflective log;

9.2.10.2. Provide appropriate guidance on sources of relevant secondary data, e.g. previous research;

9.2.10.3. Provide commentary/feedback on the four papers and all other sections of the DBA thesis;

9.2.10.4. Offer suggestions regarding the conceptualisation, design, operationalisation, analysis and write-up of the work.

9.2.11. It is the responsibility of the DBA participant to:

9.2.11.1. Maintain a reflective log from the first workshop, through Phases 1, 2, and 3, to include relevant excerpts in the final DBA thesis;

9.2.11.2. Decide on an area of study and become thoroughly familiar with the procedures on referencing, plagiarism avoidance guidelines, ethical issues, the format for presentation of the research papers and DBA thesis, and the various submission deadlines;

9.2.11.3. Prepare, present and defend four research papers of publishable quality;

9.2.11.4. Make meeting and submission arrangements with supervisor(s) and highlight any concerns or questions in advance of them becoming a problem or difficulty;

9.2.11.5. Maintain the DBA Project Meeting Log;

9.2.11.6. Submit material to supervisors in time for review and comment (a minimum of 14 days in advance of an arranged meeting);

9.2.11.7. Make appropriate arrangements to attend, participate and contribute to all professional development workshops and research paper presentations.

9.2.12. The responsibility for the thesis is entirely that of the participant, as is the ultimate outcome in terms of performance.

### 9.3. DBA Programme Boards

9.3.1. A programme board is established for each approved professional doctorate offered by the University. The programme Boards monitors the design and delivery of the programme, the academic performance of the learners, and the programme's overall academic standards. It shall assess the programme's development on an annual basis through the analysis of such indicators as learner feedback, external examiner feedback, retention and attrition rates, and examination results.

9.3.2. The Programme Board, as a Committee of Academic Council, bears primary responsibility for assuring and enhancing the academic quality of the programme under its remit and for reporting annually to Academic Council on its progress in this regard.

9.3.3. The Programme Board is also a committee of the School within which it operates and as such will carry out its duties in accordance with the academic arrangement and strategic planning of the School/Department and in close collaboration with the academic management of the School/Department.

9.3.4. Programme Board Membership is:

9.3.4.1. All academic staff assigned to tutor or supervise on the programme shall be members of the Programme Board;

9.3.4.2. A representative number of learners of the course shall also be members of the Programme board. Learner membership shall be arranged in accordance with agreed Academic Council procedures;

9.3.4.3. An academic staff member(s) of the board will be assigned the duty of Programme Co-ordinator(s) by the Head of Department;

9.3.4.4. The Programme Board may co-opt persons from outside the University whose involvement with the course would be beneficial due to their particular expertise or field of activity;

9.3.4.5. The Head of Department shall be an ex-officio member of the Programme Board.

9.3.5. Each member of the board should declare possible conflict of interests.

9.3.6. The following operational guidelines should be observed:

9.3.6.1. The Agenda for all meetings is to be agreed in advance by the Programme Co-ordinator and Head of Department.

9.3.6.2. Meetings should be called in a timely fashion and documentation circulated in advance. Members should be made aware of the meeting in advance and where members are unable to attend they may make a written submission to the Board. All submissions should be duly considered by the attendees.

9.3.6.3. There should be a systematic and formal decision-making procedure within programme boards, with indications of what actions are to be taken and who is responsible for them, as appropriate. If a member cannot attend a meeting the member may contribute, in writing, to the decision being made.

9.3.6.4. Learner representatives may attend all meetings of the programme board but should absent themselves when details of individual learner performance or other personal details on individual learners are to be discussed. No examination results should be discussed in the presence of learner representatives. Normally items such as these are reserved as the final item on the programme board meeting agenda.

9.3.6.5. Minutes of all meetings are to be kept in School/Department archives and circulated as soon as practicable after each meeting to both the Head of School and Head of Department.

#### 9.4. DBA Examination Processes

9.4.1. The examination of the DBA programme operates on the basis of accumulation of credits over the entire programme. Thus, credits are accumulated in Phase 1 for the workshop assessments, in Phase 2 for the panel-examined papers and in Phase 3 for the DBA thesis and viva voce.

9.4.2. The modules are assessed by individual workshop tutors on the basis of the learning outcomes and specific examination criteria set in the programme handbook. All of the outputs of Phase 1 of the DBA are assessed by appointed external examiners. The modules in Phase 1 will be graded.

9.4.3. Each research paper in the research paper series (Papers 1 to 4) is examined by an internal and external examiner. On the basis of the submitted paper and presentation made, the examiners determine one of the following outcomes:

9.4.3.1. Recommended; The paper has been recommended, but the recommendation may be subject to minor textual changes being addressed. Any minor changes must be completed within one month.

9.4.3.2. Revisions required; The amendments required by the examiners must be completed and the revised paper reviewed by the Internal Examiner only who certifies that the revisions are satisfactory. The maximum time period allowed for submission of the reviewed paper is 3 months. Where major revisions are required, both Internal and External Examiners may request to review the amended paper and certify that the revisions are satisfactory. Once the revised paper is approved by the Examiners a pass result will be entered on the examination broadsheet.

9.4.3.3. Not recommended; Candidates receiving this paper examination determination have not met the criteria to achieve the learning outcomes of a research paper. The candidate will be permitted to recommence the paper and resubmit a new paper for full re-examination at the next available opportunity with the DBA programme cycles.

9.4.4. The supervisor is not involved in the determination of the paper result. Supervisors, however, are required to submit a Supervisor Participation Report detailing the engagement from the candidate over the paper preparation period. This report is prepared for each paper and submitted to the DBA Co-ordinator(s) for forwarding to examiners, along with the paper.

9.4.5. A candidate must attain the required pass standard in all modules on the DBA; there is no facility to pass by compensation. One workshop assignment or paper may be carried within the specific phase of the DBA but must be successfully completed to progress to the next phase.

9.4.6. The Degree of Doctor of Business Administration is awarded without classification. In the case of successful candidates, the broadsheet of results should be annotated 'Recommended' and signed by the Examination Board.

9.5. If a candidate has successfully completed Phase 1 of the DBA (e.g. workshops), but does not wish to continue into Phases 2 and 3 of the DBA, or has been unsuccessful in the transfer process at the doctoral colloquium (Phase 1 to Phase 2 transfer), the candidate may apply for the exit award of the Post Graduate Diploma in Business Research Methods. This award represents 60 credits based on successful completion of all the workshops in Phase 1 of the programme.

The roles and duties of the internal and external examiners in all modules on the DBA programme, apart from the Thesis module, are as given in Chapters 8 of the *WIT Academic Regulations for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes*. The regulations and assessment pertaining to the thesis module are given in §8 of Graduate Studies Regulations and §8 of Graduate Studies Code of Practice.



## **10.Complaints, Grievances, Mitigations and Appeals.**

The University acknowledges that difficulties may arise for any stakeholders involved in research postgraduate programmes. The SETU is committed to dealing with all grievances, complaints and appeals in a timely, fair and equitable manner.

These guidance and regulations apply to Learners registered on a program of study leading a research degree award at Level 9 or Level 10, or to those involved in the supervision and/or management of such Learners. Postgraduates, supervisors or other stakeholders of the research programme who are experiencing harassment or bullying should refer to SETU's Respect and Dignity at Work Policy for appropriate action.

This section is comprised of three parts:

10.1 relates to complaints and grievances processes and procedures within the context of postgraduate research studies.

10.2 relates to appeals against academic decisions within the context of postgraduate research studies.

10.3 relates to mitigations within the context of postgraduate research examinations, e.g. viva voce.

### **10.1:**

Seeking advice and informal resolution:

10.1.1. Whenever possible, Learners, supervisors and other stakeholders in the programme may attempt to resolve problems informally and may need to seek advice, depending on the nature of the problem.

- In the first instance research postgraduates may wish to approach the GSO regarding issues and further signposting.
- Research postgraduates may also seek the advice of members of the Research Postgraduates' Forum.
- Research postgraduates who have concerns about academic matters may attempt to resolve them collaboratively with their supervisors. The supervisors, may refer the learner for further support within SETU or may act as their advocate, if appropriate.
- For guidance and advice on issues related to project funding and relationships with external research partners research postgraduates may contact the Research Support Office.
- Research postgraduates may contact the Head of Graduate Studies who upon consideration may empanel an independent group of SETU staff to act as a Postgraduate Ombudsman group. The members of this group must be drawn from a School/Faculty

independent to the learner concerned. This group will consider any complaints the learner may have regarding their interactions with their supervisors, Research Programme Boards, or any other SETU functions. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Postgraduate Ombudsman group may advocate on behalf of the Learner, or may advise them to pursue an official complaint, by following the SETU's Learner Complaints Policy.

#### 10.1.2. Formal Complaints

10.1.2.1. Postgraduates and supervisors, who have been unable to resolve a complaint informally or who deem the complaint to be extremely serious, may lodge a formal written complaint with their Head of School/Faculty.

10.1.2.2. This will then be taken up and dealt with in accordance with SETU's Learner Complaints Policy and its Respect and Dignity at Work Policy, which are available on SETU's website.

10.1.2.3. Decisions of SETU are subject to review by the Office of the Ombudsman.

10.1.2.4. Where the learner complainant is unhappy with the outcome of SETU's response to the complaint under the Complaints Policy and the Respect and Dignity at Work Policy, they may refer their case to the Office of the Ombudsman.

### **10.2:**

#### 10.2.1. Academic Appeals.

10.2.1.1. Academic appeals against decisions affected research postgraduate Learners can only be considered where the appeal is based on the grounds of perceived irregularity or inequity in the assessment or examination process. Alternatively, appeals may be made on the grounds of deviation(s) from the approved criteria in the delivery of the programme that has been ratified by the Academic Council or other validating authority.

10.2.1.2. Appeals made on the basis of academic judgement will be considered invalid.

10.2.1.3. Appeals may not be used to raise complaints relating to, or criticisms of, a supervisor and should be based on facts only. If a learner wishes to raise a complaint, the learner should in the first instance discuss the matter with the relevant Head of Department or the Head of Graduate Studies, or progress the complaint in accordance with the Learner Complaints Policy or SETU's policy on respect and dignity.

10.2.1.4. Research postgraduate Learners have the right to appeal the following decision(s):

- Assessment results of a project-path, or universal-path or professional doctorate modules taken by a Learner;
- Appraisal of progress as 'unsatisfactory' by a Research Examination Board;
- Decisions of a PhD transfer/confirmation panel;

- Decisions to terminate the Learner's registration on the programme;
- Decisions of examiners for award-stage assessment.

10.2.1.5. Appeals of assessment results will only be considered after the relevant board/committee has approved the determination.

10.2.1.6. Pending the outcome of an appeal, Learners are advised that:

10.2.1.6.1. An appeal may not necessarily be successful;

10.2.1.6.2. The conferring of an academic award, where relevant, may be deferred, pending the final outcome of the appeal.

10.2.2. Appeals procedures.

10.2.2.1. A learner who wishes to appeal a decision must do so in writing to the office of the Registrar, setting out the grounds for the appeal in full with evidence where appropriate. The appeal must normally be received within ten working days of the publication of the decision.

10.2.2.2. In the first instance the Research Degree Appeal (RDA) Board considers the submitted documentation and reaches one of the following initial findings:

- i. A case for hearing the appeal has not been made. in which case the reasons should be stated;
- ii. A case for hearing the appeal has been established and the RDA Board will consider the appeal on some but not all cited grounds;
- iii. A case for hearing the appeal has been established and the RDA Board will consider the appeal on all cited grounds.

10.2.2.3. The outcome of the initial consideration is communicated directly to the learner within seven working days of receipt of an appeal, where the appeals board finds grounds for an appeal have been established the board has a further twenty-one days to conclude the process and communicate the outcome to the Learner.

10.2.2.4. Where grounds for an appeal have been established the appeal shall be referred to the relevant Research Programme Board for a written response and further consideration by the RDA Board.

10.2.2.5. The RDA Board shall normally consist of at least ten members, including the Registrar or their nominee who shall chair the board and the Vice-President for Research and Development. Four members shall be drawn from Academic Council, one shall be a Students' Union Officer and at least four shall be Heads of School/Faculty. When the RDA Board is considering appeals relating to Learners, the Registrar may invite the Head of Graduate Studies to participate in the discussions.

10.2.2.6. A member of the RDA Board who has a perceived conflict of interest shall withdraw from the process and an appropriate replacement be nominated.

10.2.2.7. The RDA Board shall consider the appeal only on the grounds on which it is presented, and shall, as appropriate, consult with the relevant stakeholders in the decision process.

10.2.2.8. The RDA Board shall determine the appeal by giving a decision. The Chair of the board shall inform the appellant and the Head of Department in writing of the outcome of the appeal and of the grounds on which the decision was made.

10.2.2.9. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to inform the supervisor and the Research Program Board of the outcome.

10.2.2.10. Where an aspect of an appeal should be considered under a different policy, e.g. SETU's Respect and Dignity policy, then the relevant detail shall be forwarded to the relevant body by the RDA Board.

### **10.3.**

10.3.1. This process relates to mitigations that may be warranted to avoid disadvantaging a candidate in relation to the *viva voce* examination. Where circumstances exist that could disadvantage a learner in relation to progress during the program of study or completion of their dissertation, they are advised to seek guidance from their supervisors or the Graduate Studies Office and to consult the regulations on suspensions or extensions to study.

10.3.1.1. The University accepts that a candidate may sometimes perform more poorly in the viva than expected and that this might be attributed, or partially attributed, to particular circumstances beyond the control of the Learner.

10.3.1.2. A candidate may make a claim for mitigations in one of two sets of circumstances:

- Following submission of the thesis but prior to the scheduled viva voce.
- During the viva.

10.3.1.3. If claiming in relation to 1.2.1 above these circumstances, where evidenced, can be considered grounds for mitigations.

10.3.1.4. Where a candidate makes such an application, under 1.2.1 above, they must indicate the purpose of their claim, i.e. whether they wish the viva to be postponed.

10.3.1.5. For circumstances arising during the viva voce please see 3 below.

10.3.1.6. Where workplace adjustments have already been made to accommodate a declared disability it is the responsibility of the candidate to indicate this on the Intention to Submit form should they wish for these adjustments to be facilitated, where reasonable, during the viva voce examination.

10.3.2. Claim for mitigations following submission of the dissertation but prior to the viva voce examination.

10.3.2.1. A learner must complete either a signed hard-copy declaration or an equivalent online form where electronic submission is used, to claim formally extenuating circumstances.

10.3.2.2. Claims must be accompanied by supporting evidence.

10.3.2.3. The learner must submit the claim and evidence to the Graduate Studies Office.

10.3.2.4. The deadline for submission of a claim is normally within ten working days of the claimed circumstances. Retrospective requests are not permitted except in exceptional circumstances and where there is evidenced good reason for the learner not to have made a request in advance, for example the nature of the circumstances themselves prevents the learner from making a request beforehand.

10.3.2.5. Independent documentary evidence, e.g. medical certificates, must normally be provided in all cases to verify extenuating circumstances. However, evidence which is less independent may be acceptable in some cases where independent corroboration is difficult to obtain.

10.3.2.6. Submitted evidence should be dated and its source or author clearly stated. Where no evidence (independent or otherwise) can be provided, it is at the discretion of the Head of Graduate Studies to decide whether it is more likely than not the claimed circumstances have occurred.

10.3.2.7. Any claim and supporting evidence provided by the learner will need to be considered by the Head of Graduate Studies or nominee to assess whether it is likely that the circumstances claimed have the potential to affect the Learner's performance in or attendance at the viva voce.

10.3.2.8. The Head of Graduate Studies will notify the learner of their decision; if the circumstances are deemed to have the potential to impact the Learner's performance in the viva voce this notification will include whether the scheduled viva is to be postponed or proceed as planned with mitigations in place.

10.3.2.9. It is the responsibility of the Head of Graduate Studies to ensure that the Independent Chair and Examiners are informed of these circumstances prior to the examination, provided that the candidate has given consent to share this information.

10.3.2.10. It is the responsibility of the Head of Graduate Studies to ensure any agreed mitigations are in place for the viva voce examination.

10.3.2.11. If the viva voce is to proceed, the Head of Graduate Studies is to inform the independent Chair that they reserve the right to stop the examination, if appropriate (e.g. should the learner become ill), and to reschedule the viva voce to start afresh.

10.3.3. Mitigations for disruptions during the viva voce examination.

10.3.3.1. Categories of extenuating challenging circumstances that could arise during the viva include something that occurs whilst the learner is attending the exam, of which the learner was aware at the time, and which might affect the Learner's performance. For this purpose, 'Challenging circumstances' are defined as: sudden illness, disturbance (e.g. fire alarm), material administrative or procedural errors (e.g. error in paperwork regarding the timing of the exam or incorrect information).

provided to Examiners, lack of previously agreed reasonable adjustments) or environmental factors (e.g. adverse temperature or external noise).

10.3.3.2. The learner should raise issues of concern that occur during the viva to the Chair at the time.

10.3.3.3. Should challenging circumstances (as defined above) arise during the viva, the Chair should exercise judgment and take executive action. The Examiners should ask the learner whether or not they wish to continue with the viva. The Chair's decisions might include the following possible outcomes:

- i. Continue with the viva, making any arrangements they deem necessary to allow the examination to go ahead e.g. by briefly suspending the exam to provide a short break.
- ii. Adjourn the viva and request SETU to re-schedule a new viva to start afresh.

10.3.3.4 Where the validity of the circumstances claimed are accepted, it will be for the Chair to make a judgment as to whether there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the Learner's performance in the viva may actually be affected. If the learner considers that the Examiners have not taken due account of their concerns they will have a right to submit an appeal under 10.2. of these regulations.

10.3.3.5. The Chair and Examiners should record on their normal reports any challenging circumstances and also the outcome decision. The Head of Graduate Studies will maintain oversight of such cases to ensure a coherent cross-School/Faculty approach.

10.3.3.6. If the learner fails to attend the viva but is unable to provide any reason for their non-attendance to their Supervisors, the Head of Graduate Studies or to the Examiners the viva will be abandoned and the circumstances investigated by the Head of Graduate Studies. If the investigation establishes good reason for the Learner's non-attendance, the viva will be rescheduled, but if no good reason is identified, the learner will be failed by the Examiners on that occasion. The learner will have a right of appeal as per Part 2 of these regulations.

## Annex 1: Standards and Descriptors for Award at Level 9 and Level 10.

### Masters Degree (NFQ Level 9 – major award)

Research Masters Degree programmes are typically of 2 years duration, though they are not credit rated. The Masters Degree as awarded by Irish Institutions is compatible with completion of the Bologna Second Cycle. Descriptors of the learning outcomes are given below in Table 2: Research Masters Degree Descriptors. In designing research programmes, staff are required to take cognisance of the standards for specific fields of learning where they generally relate to the Masters programme being proposed. It is not possible to have a standard, or multiple standards, that cater for the complete range of programmes possible. It is therefore expected that the standards for specific fields of learning will be used as reference points for the design of programmes. It is not expected that all programmes include every learning outcome identified in a standard. When designing a programme, each learning outcome in the standard is considered; if departure from these is necessary, it is justified in the context of the specific orientation of the programme.

*Table 2: Research Masters Degree Descriptors<sup>3</sup>*

<b>Purpose</b>	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
<b>NFQ Level</b>	9
<b>Volume</b>	Large
<b>Knowledge – breadth</b>	A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning
<b>Knowledge – kind</b>	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning
<b>Know-how and skill - range</b>	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry
<b>Know-how and skill - selectivity</b>	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques

<sup>3</sup> QQI - Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes

<b>Competence - context</b>	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill- defined contexts
<b>Competence - role</b>	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity
<b>Competence – learning to learn</b>	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development
<b>Competence - insight</b>	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them
<b>Progression &amp; Transfer</b>	Progression to programmes leading to Doctoral Degree, or to another Masters Degree or to a Post-graduate Diploma

A student is deemed to be qualified to Masters Degree level if they are able to demonstrate the following characteristics as judged by written examination of their dissertation or oral examination by viva voce:

- Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with first cycle, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context;
- Can apply their knowledge and understanding, and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study;
- Have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity, and formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, but that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements;
- Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously;
- Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.



### Doctoral Degree (NFQ Level 10 – major award)

The Doctoral Degree is awarded where a candidate undertakes research that makes an original and substantial contribution to knowledge and demonstrates the candidate’s capacity to pursue original research and scholarship. Descriptors of the learning outcomes are provided below in Table 3: Doctoral Degree Descriptors. Irrespective of the mode of delivery, i.e. traditional or structured PhD, a Doctoral Degree will meet the learning objectives below.

*Table 3: Doctoral Degree Descriptors<sup>4</sup>*

<b>Purpose</b>	This is a multi-purpose award-type. The knowledge, skill and competence acquired are relevant to personal development, participation in society and community, employment, and access to additional education and training.
<b>NFQ Level</b>	10
<b>Volume</b>	Large
<b>Knowledge - breadth</b>	A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of
<b>Knowledge - kind</b>	The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research, or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy review by peers
<b>Know-how and skill - range</b>	Demonstrate a significant range of the principal skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or materials which are associated with a field of learning; develop new skills, techniques, tools, practices and/or
<b>Know-how and skill - selectivity</b>	Respond to abstract problems that expand and redefine existing procedural knowledge
<b>Competence - context</b>	Exercise personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent contexts
<b>Competence - role</b>	Communicate results of research and innovation to peers; engage in critical dialogue; lead and originate complex social
<b>Competence – learning to learn</b>	Learn to critique the broader implications of applying knowledge to particular contexts

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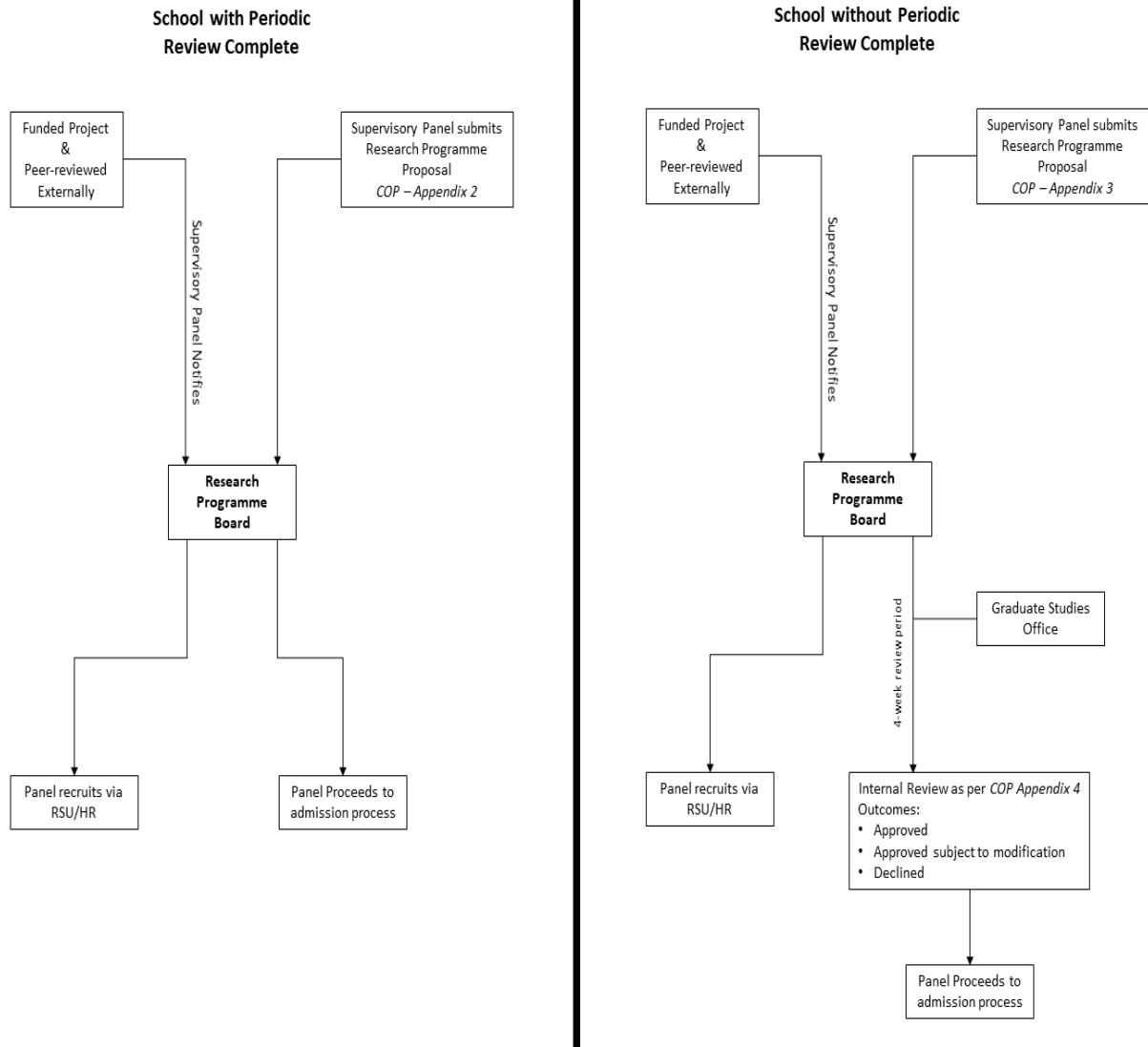
<sup>4</sup> QQI - Ireland’s Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes

<b>Competence - insight</b>	Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and lead action to change them
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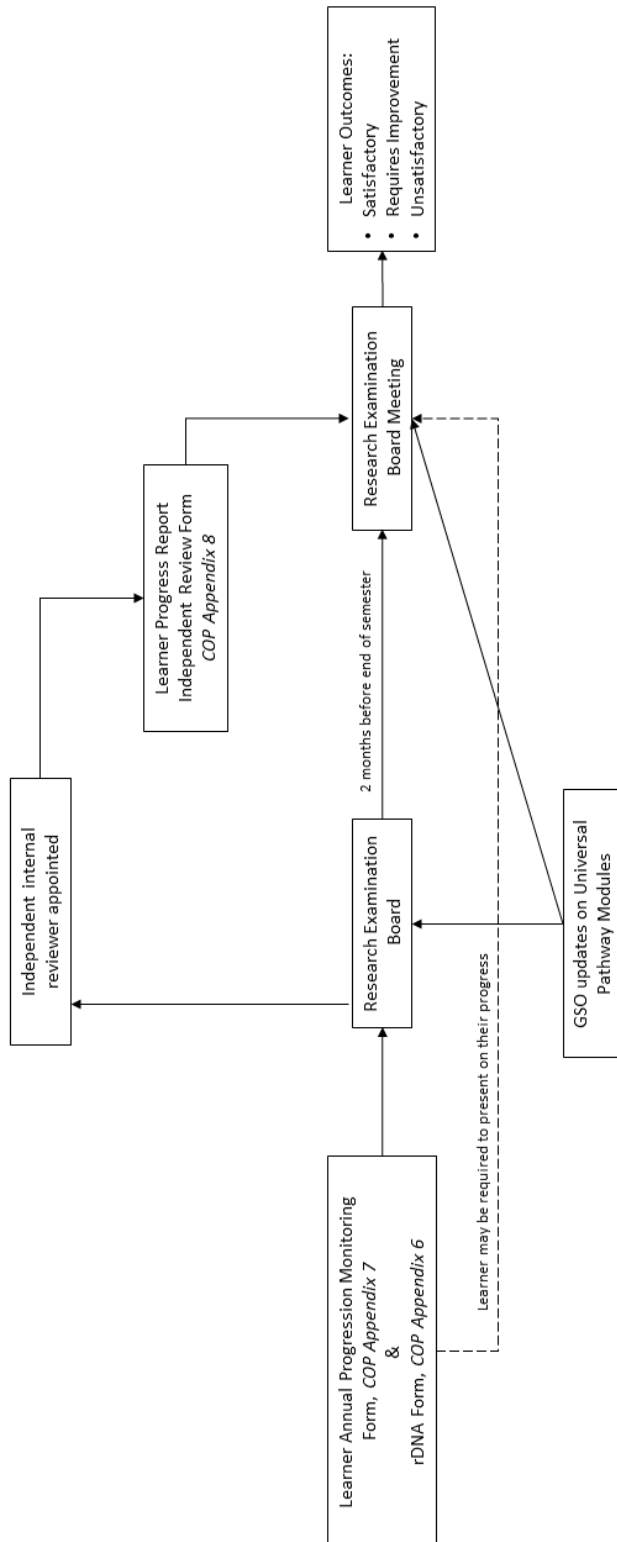
Furthermore, a student is deemed to be qualified to Doctoral Degree level if they are able to demonstrate the following characteristics as judged by written examination of their dissertation or oral examination by *viva voce*:

- Have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;
- Have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;
- Have contributed through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;
- Are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
- Can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
- Can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge-based society.

## Annex 2: Workflow for development of Research Programme Proposals.



### Annex 3: Workflow for completion of annual progression review.



#### **Annex 4: Guidance for PhD confirmation, or transfer, proposals**

These guidelines are not a definitive, or exhaustive, list of the required contents for each proposal. The final content and structure will vary depending on the subject area or discipline. Learners should seek advice from both their supervision teams and clarification on any mandates from their Research Programme Board. Each proposal should be at least 5000 words, but this may vary depending on the discipline and format in which contents are presented. Where appropriate the proposal should contain:

- A concise statement of the research question(s);
- A critical literature review relevant to the research question(s) highlighting current knowledge gaps;
- As appropriate to the discipline of study, an explanation of the conceptual framework to be used and/or a summary of experimental methods and equipment requirements. This may include a rationale as to why the proposed framework is suitable to address the identified research question(s);
- A summary of progress to date including preliminary data, findings, resources developed etc.;
- A defence for the relevance and importance of the study thus far;
- Proposed schedule and timeline for the phases of the study, based on date of submission;
- A brief bibliography;
- A list of publications produced, or presentations made, during the period since the learner's initial registration;
- A summary training or development undertaken thus far and any identified training or development that is critical to conducting the work.

Where possible the candidate should be guided by discipline specific approaches to the report in their own subject area.

## **Annex 5: Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s).**

For the initial submission, the candidate must prepare copies of the dissertation for distribution to the internal examiner and the external examiner(s). Initially, the candidate should present the dissertation in soft binding to facilitate any subsequent revisions that may be required.

The form and method of presentation of the candidate's work shall be proposed to Academic Council by the Department or School/Faculty by the Research Program Board and shall be appropriate to the nature of the work (e.g. in certain disciplines, elements of the submission may take the form of an exhibition or a performance). Details regarding the format of presentation (dissertation together with performed and exhibited elements) are provided in Section 4 below. These regulations shall apply to the presentation of dissertations for awards at NFQ Level 9 (by research and dissertation) and at NFQ Level 10.

In the case of a dissertation, which is accompanied by an exhibit or artefact produced or developed by the candidate, which forms a significant part of the submission, it shall be the Department's responsibility to arrange appropriate and convenient access to the exhibit or artefact for the purpose of assessment by the external examiner(s).

A Masters by research dissertation should not normally exceed 45,000 words of text excluding figure captions, tables, footnotes, appendices and bibliography.

A PhD dissertation should not normally exceed 100,000 words of text excluding figure captions, tables, footnotes, appendices and bibliography.

In the case of some disciplines the words of text may be substantially less than the indicated upper limit.

### **1. Abstract of Dissertation**

An abstract not exceeding 500 words should be provided as an integral part of the dissertation, and should precede the main text. Each copy of the dissertation submitted should include a copy of the abstract. The abstract should be printed or typed in single spacing and should indicate the author and title of the dissertation in the form of a heading. The abstract shall be printed or typed in single spacing and shall indicate the author and title of the dissertation in the form of a heading.

### **2. Declaration**

The submitted dissertation shall be accompanied by a declaration from the learner, confirming that the work submitted is their own, except where otherwise accredited, and that it has not been submitted for an award at any other institution.

### **3. Formatting**

### 3.1 Print and Pagination

The dissertation should be in typescript or print (12-point type) on A4-size paper single-sided, with pages numbered consecutively. The main text should be typed or printed in one and one half or double spacing; footnotes and quotations should be typed or printed (10-point type) in single spacing. On each page, there should be a left-hand margin of at least 40mm and a right-hand margin of at least 20mm. Each such page should also have a page number.

Photographs or diagrams, if any, should, where feasible, be incorporated digitally within the text. Where this is not appropriate or practicable they should be fixed firmly in place. They should be provided with reference numbers and legends.

Where the dissertation consists of more than one volume, the pagination should indicate the relevant volume number as well as the page-number on each page.

Appendices should be named alphabetically, and each appendix paginated consecutively, but separately, from the main text and from each other.

Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page and about 20mm above the edge of the page.

### 3.2 Front Board and Spine

The front board (cover) of the dissertation shall be a single plain colour and contain the following information only in gold lettering:

- i. the title of the dissertation;
- ii. the initials and name of the candidate;
- iii. the award for which the dissertation is submitted, the year of submission and the name of the awarding authority;
- iv. the volume number and the total number of volumes where the dissertation consists of more than one volume.

The same information (excluding the title of the dissertation) shall be printed along the spine of the cover in such a way as to be easily legible when the copy is lying flat, with the front cover uppermost. All lettering on the cover and the spine shall be of plain graphic design.

### 3.3 Title Page

The title page of each volume of the dissertation should contain the following information:

- i. the full title of the dissertation, with any subtitles, in 20-point type;
- ii. if there is more than one volume, the total number of volumes and the number of the particular volume;
- iii. the full name of the author with, if desired, any qualifications or distinctions;

- iv. the award for which the dissertation is submitted;
- v. the name of Technological University of the South East;
- vi. the names(s) of the supervisor(s) of the research;
- vii. as the last line on the page, the statement 'Submitted to Technological University of the South East, (Month) (Year)'.

### **3.4 Footnotes and Quotations**

Footnotes and indented quotations should be single line spaced. The footnotes in each chapter should be numbered consecutively. A list of references may be included either at the end of the chapter to which they relate, or in a separate reference section located at the end of the main body of the text, before any appendices. References should be thorough and comprehensive.

### **3.5 Bibliography**

The dissertation must include a bibliography of the works consulted in its composition. The referencing system must be consistent with the normal system used within that discipline.

## **4. Presentation of examinable work, performed/exhibited element(s) and compositions.**

Research Program Boards must consider, and propose, at application for registration for an award by research and dissertation the form in which any proposed practitioner element is to be presented, and the proposed arrangements for making it available for assessment by the examiners. Performances or exhibitions which form part of the PhD or MSc submission are normally pre-recorded. Candidates may, however, request that their examination include a maximum of one live concert/exhibition, which must also be recorded for the purposes of inclusion in the final approved submission. However, this is subject to approval from the Research Programme Board and the GSO. Candidates and their Supervisory panel should provide the rationale for including a live and a recorded performance, giving careful consideration to the logistics of doing so.

It is the responsibility of SETU to ensure that adequate disclosures and arrangements have been made in this regard to facilitate examination.

Where performance or exhibition, whether on the part of the learner or of another person or persons, comprise the practitioner element, it is the SETU's responsibility to arrange appropriate and convenient access by the external examiner(s) to any necessary performance(s) or exhibition(s) and to such facilities as are required for full and proper assessment.

Requirements for submissions, of which performance, practice or exhibition forms a significant part for the purposes of postgraduate research awards, are as follows: -

- a) The work shall have been undertaken as part of a registered postgraduate research programme;



- b) The final submission shall be accompanied by a permanent record of the creative work(s) this must be in the form of an electronic copy of a recognized format (pdf, mp3, .wav, mp4, etc.) on an open-access web-link:
- c) The creative work(s) shall be set in its relevant theoretical, historical, critical or visual context;
- d) There shall be a written dissertation;
- e) The work constitutes an independent and original contribution to knowledge;
- f) The submission shall demonstrate an understanding of appropriate methodology;
- g) There shall be an oral examination.

## Annex 6: PhD by Publication

### Introduction

#### Overview

Article-based PhDs produce a thesis developed around a series of publications. This approach can suit some candidates and offers both advantages and challenges to the candidate, the supervisory team and the HEI. The option of Article-based PhDs is available at several Irish and international institutions. External review panels and government agencies expect higher education institutes' research outputs to be reflected at least in part in their publication profile. The same is true of individual researchers and even of the doctoral candidates themselves, especially if subsequently applying for an academic position. Article-based PhDs contribute to publication profiles, as the candidate must meet the quality and quantity of publications required by the HEI's standards. However, **the decision to pursue this route to PhD should not be taken lightly**, as there are risks inherent with the choice, around the time to publish and the consequences it may have for doctorate completion, the lack of guarantee of being published and the imperative to construct a coherent dissertation that confirms the quality of the candidate and their work.

#### Rationale

The principal driver for article-based PhDs over, for example, a hybrid model of traditional dissertation with publications, was the perception that the latter model produced less publications, due in part to the amount of time taken to publish in an appropriate publication and the possible lack of impetus to publish final outcomes once the PhD has been awarded.

#### Benefits

Publishing during candidature helps candidates start their own process of academic writing, permits the candidate to demonstrate their potential to produce novel material and provides early external expert analysis through the publication review process. Publishing through its iterative nature requires the candidate to reflect on their work. Finally, early publication of research reduces the possibility of others publishing the material first and fosters early career recognition for the researcher, as well as rendering them more competitive for postdoctoral fellowships and external funding.

#### Risks

Publishing articles is usually an iterative process and can consume a good deal of time, with the time needed varying by discipline and publication. In some disciplines research articles can be very concise, which in turn restricts the candidate's ability to display their contextual insight, defend the credibility of their approach, present their outcomes completely or interpret the consequence of their publication. Quality and suitability of journals must be considered and monitored. In the case of an article-based PhD there is a particular challenge for candidates to deliver a coherent thesis from individual publications.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities that apply in relation to this policy range from SETU Academic Council oversight and approval to the various stakeholders at school and departmental level charged with its successful implementation. All parties have a responsibility to follow relevant and agreed procedures in place to implement this policy.

Their roles are defined in the following:

### **Academic Council**

- To monitor reports on the policy implementation
- To review and approve the policy on a periodic basis.

### **PhD Research Students and Supervisory Teams**

- To inform themselves of this policy
- To make decisions having evaluated the risks and benefits described in the policy
- To monitor publication quality and suitability of publication outlets/journals

### **Staff /Learners /External Parties**

- To contribute and adhere to policy statements in this document.

## **Principles of Operation in Article-based PhDs**

### **Candidate Decision-making**

Publishing places the candidates at an expert level but not all candidates may be ready to take on the role of presenting and defending their work to their external peers in a blinded review process. Learners undertaking a PhD by publication are still subject to meeting the standards expected of all doctoral learners. Therefore, an article-based PhD should only be considered where there is awareness of the challenges and confidence that a learner can reach the publishing requirements, in addition to meeting the PhD standards. In this respect, the candidate should be made aware of, and engage with their supervisory panel, on the related requirements in terms of authorship, time, and where appropriate, financial constraints. For the latter, costs associated with experiments required for manuscript revisions and Open access publications must be considered. Conversations that shape this decision should be held at the earliest opportunity, ideally during recruitment or shortly thereafter, and when candidates are developing their training plans, which must include relevant milestones. Should the candidate fail to meet pre-defined milestones during either progression or transfer/confirmation assessment stages as well as revised milestones, if deemed necessary, reversion to traditional PhD presentation becomes the default position.

## **Research Programme Board Approval of Candidate's Decision and Ongoing Monitoring**

The decision to opt for an article-based PhD must be presented to and approved by the School's / Departments Research Programme Board (RPB). Each proposal should describe how the minimum threshold of three (co-) first author peer-reviewed articles (in Scopus, ISI ranked journals or equivalent) will be achieved. Guidance regarding publication and journal quality should be provided following a discussion at the RPB and progress against agreed milestones should be monitored annually through the Progress Monitoring Process.

Where the Candidate fails to meet the milestones as established and agreed by all parties and approved by the RPB at the outset of the programme, the Candidate should be allowed to resubmit a plan with revised milestones and a credible analysis of why the original milestones were not met in order to determine whether s/he can continue. Consideration of whether to allow the candidate's continued pursuit of an Article-based PhD should also occur through the progression or transfer/confirmation processes, where remedial actions can be identified. Examples of these may include, but are not limited to, completion of revisions of publications or submission of manuscripts. Where such short-term actions are recommended, they should be monitored through follow-up and related decisions should be reported by the supervisory team to the RPB.

## **Discipline-specific and Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA)-related considerations**

Institutional policies and regulations governing research integrity and ethics, authorship and conflicts of interest must be complied with.

In the selection of publication outlets, discipline-specific guidance should be considered, this should combine the inputs of the supervisory panel, RPB and other published guidance. For example, in the field of Business candidates should consult <https://charteredabs.org/academic-journal-guide-2021/>

Candidates must also consider discipline specific guidance on the presentation of data and studies for publication, for example in the Life Sciences candidates may consult <https://www.pnas.org/content/118/17/e2103238118>.

The **usage of secondary data** for publications is possible, and should be guided by the FAIR principles<sup>i</sup>. However, the outcomes of such analysis must demonstrate a **significant novel contribution** to the specific field. Some non-exhaustive examples include the development of novel analytical tools or techniques utilising published datasets, or meta-analysis that incorporates multiple datasets resulting in a novel finding. The generation of original knowledge remains a quality requirement.

It is recognised in this policy that metrics such as Journal Impact Factor and other related journal metrics are not necessarily good indicators of the quality of the chosen medium for research publication. As a consequence, the selection of the publication medium (by the doctoral candidate with guidance from the supervisory panel and RPB) and the later evaluation in the examination process (by the appointed doctoral examination panel) should be guided by the

DORA recommendations to establish a modern and meaningful method to research evaluation, some relevant considerations including being to:

Eliminate (or at least contextualise taking into account established weightings, due for example to the discipline) the use of journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, in evaluating the merits of publications;

Assess research on its own merits rather than on the basis of the journal in which the research is published.

### **Authorship**

In **STEM fields**, as each publication will usually have more than one author, the learner's contribution in an article-based PhD must be recognised by examiners and supervisors as being significant. The candidate must use a standardised method of assigning contributions when preparing their thesis or transfer/confirmation documents, this should be based upon the Credit (Contributor Roles Taxonomy) system<sup>ii</sup>. An Authorship and Contribution statement, detailing the contribution of the candidate and stating the contributions of all co-authors involved, must accompany each publication in the thesis.

In many areas of the **Humanities**, Social Sciences, and Law, it is quite common to publish as a single author. Often the same person has formulated the problem, collected and edited the data, and written the text.

In cases where co- or multi-authorship occurs, only the persons who have contributed to documentation, analysis and writing are normally included as authors of a work. Therefore, a person who contributes to documentation, formulation of ideas for the analysis, comments on the writing, or provides technical help would not qualify as an author, unless the person had also contributed substantially to the writing of the work.

The requirement of writing is paramount in determining authorship, except in some instances of collaborative research that may include technical disciplines (e.g. digital humanities), practice-based research, or applied social science. For example, the American Psychological Association (APA) has guidelines for co-authorship similar to those in medicine/scientific fields. Authorship is not only attributed to persons who wrote a manuscript, but can include others who have made a substantial contribution to a study. Unlike the STEM subjects, with collaborative projects in the humanities it is not always necessary to include all contributors in the by-line. Other contributors than the writer are often mentioned in the acknowledgements. Co-authors are usually listed alphabetically.

### **Confirmation/transfer**

The confirmation document should be article-based, in a similar fashion to the final dissertation, and be accompanied by a supporting narrative which outlines the timelines for completion of the pre-agreed milestones. These milestones should refer to both research work to be completed and additional work leading to publications. The learner may wish to reflect on their experiences

during the publishing process thus far and how it has informed both their approach to their own research and writing, but also their appraisal of published literature.

While the confirmation/transfer documentation should refer to any pre-agreed milestones, there is an expectation that a candidate for confirmation/transfer would have at least one accepted Article to present if applying for transfer within 2 years of registration. A section containing correspondence between the authors and journal editors, responses to reviewers' comments, and confirmation of Article acceptance should accompany the transfer/confirmation application. It is recognised that due to time constraints this may mean articles may be in author-proof format, but should have undergone peer review and have been accepted for publication.

### **Thesis and Examination**

The examiners' evaluation for award of the degree of PhD remains based upon the written thesis as presented and the oral defence of the work contained within. A fundamental characteristic of all PhD research is the original nature of the work. In preparing their thesis, a candidate submitting for examination via the article-based PhD route must still demonstrate the originality and innovative nature of their work to examiners. Candidates must also contextualise it through a critical engagement of relevant literature. The thesis must transcend the individual publications and offer a coherent presentation of the candidate's work and insights gained.

The written thesis must comply with institutional thesis requirements in every respect including spacing, font, referencing style, etc. In presenting their publications, the candidate must also provide both an introduction and discussion providing context and highlighting the interconnected nature of the subsequent publications. The dissertation should be formatted in the following style:

Introduction chapter: This chapter serves as an introduction to the research and provides a literature review of relevant prior published works. Where a published literature review can serve as a topic introduction, the candidate must still include an introductory summary.

Methodology chapter: This optional chapter should be included if the publication chapters do not provide enough detail for the method to be explored in an examination setting. Non exhaustive examples may include a published study protocol for a trial.

Chapters in publication format: Each publication must constitute a separate chapter.

Discussion/conclusion chapter: This chapter may cover the implications of the research presented within the dissertation, elaborating how the findings contribute to the wider body of work in the academic field and the potential impact on professional practice or future research.

The thesis will also be examined on key criteria such as the methodologies used, the development of the key themes and arguments, the rigour of their analysis, the overall thesis presentation and seamless connectivity of their work, the contribution to new knowledge, the candidate's role in each publication and the quality of the candidate's defence of their entire work and thesis at their oral exam.

The submitted work for assessment must meet the Level 10 standards set out in the National Framework of Qualifications. A brief, not non-exhaustive, description includes the acquisition of a systematic understanding of a large body of knowledge, being reflecting in the creation and interpretation of new knowledge by way of original research demonstrating a significant range of skills, tool and techniques.

### **Assessment of Dissertation/Research Publication**

The work shall consist of an independent and original contribution, and where elements of publications comprising the submitted work may encompass more than the candidate's contribution, there must be a clear statement about the specific contribution made by the learner being examined. This information/disclosure must be set out in an Authorship and Contribution statement in each thesis chapter, utilising the descriptors available under the CRediT system. Specifically, if the learner has shared authorship of a publication being considering for examination they must identify their own individual and independent contributions to either individual experiments/studies and the resulting formal description.

The examiners must determine if the contribution of the candidate to the work presented within the thesis represents a contribution substantial enough to assign majority ownership for the creation of the novel aspects of the work to the candidate.

The assessment of an article-based PhD candidate will be to the same standard and follow the same Quality Assurance processes as all other bodies of work submitted for PhD assessment in the institution. The possible *viva voce* outcomes are the same. The QA and associated processes for all PhDs in the institution are described in the Regulations and Code of practice governing Graduate studies. In summary for this paper, and in practice this means identical processes for the:

- Research Examination Board Meetings
- Appointment of Examiners & Independent Chair
- Date of Submission
- Examination Procedures
- *Viva voce* Examination
- Examiners' Report

### **The Standard of a PhD**

The article-based PhD candidate is therefore also examined by *viva voce*. As for all other forms of PhD assessment in the institution, the examiners are asked to comment on the research, the knowledge and scholarship contribution, the appropriateness of methodologies used, the rigour of analysis, the thesis quality, the candidate's defence of the thesis at *viva voce* and the required

revisions. It is important for the candidate to be aware that a collection of high quality journal publications on their own is insufficient to meet the standard required of a doctoral candidate and that a coherent thesis is required. The examiners must take a holistic view of the work and the thesis, which together must meet the PhD standard.



## Appendix 1: Postgraduate Research Programme

### Postgraduate Research Programme Details

#### 1. Personal Details:

Application to undertake study leading to the award of:	PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree <input type="checkbox"/>
Mode of Study	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/>
Student ID Number: If you are a SETU or former WIT/ITC student	Click or tap here to enter text.
PPS Number (Rep. Ireland Students)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname	Click or tap here to enter text.
Forenames	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date of Birth	Click or tap here to enter text.
Nationality	Click or tap here to enter text.
Address for Correspondence	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email	

#### 2. Third Level Qualifications:

Names and Addresses of Institutions attended	Years of Study		Major areas of Specialisation	Qualification	Class of Qualification (e.g. 1st Class Hons)
	From	To			

Examination to be taken or results pending - please indicate date when results are expected

3. Publications and Research Interests:

List Publications, Reports and Dissertations with titles, date and subject and, where applicable, Journal title.

Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Research Proposal:

Provide a detailed proposal of the research to be undertaken, including title. This should include a section on Aims; Objectives; Research Methodology and Project Description. (Max. 2500 Characters)

Title: Click or tap here to enter text.

---

Click or tap here to enter text.

5. Supervisory Panel

Please provide details of the potential supervisory panel you have approached about supervising this work.

Click or tap here to enter text.
----------------------------------

6. Finance:

Please state how you intend to finance your studies.

Click or tap here to enter text.
----------------------------------

7. Applicant Signature:

Applicant Declaration: I confirm that the information provided in this application form is true and correct and that any supporting documentation submitted with my application is genuine. I understand that SETU may cancel my application, withdraw or amend its offer or terminate my registration on the programme if any aspect of my application is found to be falsified.

Signature:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date:	Click or tap here to enter text.

8. Supervisory Signature:

Please ensure that at least one member of the proposed supervision team sign this EOI.

Signature:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date:	Click or tap here to enter text.

## Appendix 2: Research Programme Proposal

### Postgraduate Research Programme

#### Project Proposal

Should you wish to put forward Postgraduate Research Programme and are a member of staff within a School/Faculty that has successfully completed a periodic review within 5-years please complete this form.

Degree	Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/>
Mode of Study	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/>
Supervisory Panel <sup>1</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Research Programme <sup>2</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Training Potential <sup>3</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

1 Please refer to the Graduate Studies Regulations and Code of Practice to ensure that SETU minimum criteria for a supervisory panel are in place. Please define roles of panel members as they are currently understood.

2 Please briefly outline the background, research objectives, methodology, and timeline of the programme. If possible identify what pieces of work will map to a dissertation. 350 words maximum.

3 Identify the preliminary training that a future learner may need to undertake to ensure successful completion of the project or training that will be available to learners embarking on this programme. 250 words maximum.

## Appendix 3: Research Programme Proposal (Non-PR)

### Postgraduate Research Programme

#### Project Proposal

For use by supervisory panels proposing a programme of research where the learner will be registered in a School/Faculty that has not completed a successful periodic review in a 5-year period.

Degree	Masters <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/>
Mode of Study	Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/>
Supervisory Panel <sup>1</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Supervision Track Record <sup>2</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Research Programme <sup>3</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Training Potential <sup>4</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	
Progression and Transfer Assessors <sup>5</sup>	
Click or tap here to enter text.	

1. Please refer to the Graduate Studies Regulations and Code of Practice to ensure that SETU minimum criteria for a supervisory panel are in place. Please define roles of panel members as they are currently understood.
2. Please list, with completion times, the two most recent research learners to successfully complete either a Masters or PhD programme. Where learners have yet to complete please provide a timeline for completion for current postgraduate researchers.
3. Please briefly outline the background, research objectives, methodology, and timeline of the programme. Identify specific pieces of work that will lead to a dissertation chapter. Provide a timeline for completion of such pieces of work. 550 words maximum.
4. Identify the specific training opportunities that have been identified internally or externally that a future learner needs to undertake to ensure successful completion of the project. Provide an integrated timeframe for their completion in the context of the research timeline. 250 words maximum.
5. Please identify at least two SETU members of staff that are suitable to act as assessors of learner academic progression and suitability for transfer from Masters to PhD register. Provide an indication of whether their expertise is based in the methodology, research area, or both.

## Appendix 4: Assessment Template for Postgraduate Research Programmes

This assessment criteria should be applied to programme proposals as per Appendix 3. The research proposal should be assessed under the following criteria classified as approved, approved subject to modification and review, or not suitable.

<p>Supervisory Panel &amp; Track Record</p> <p><i>Do the supervisors collectively have the potential to successfully guide the student to dissertation submission and aid in the production of outputs from the research programme. Is there a structure defined for the panel, with at least one member with experience of a successful PhD student? Do the supervisors have a record of students producing 1<sup>st</sup> author publications or at least students making major contributions to high quality publications/research outputs.</i></p>	<p>Approved <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Approved subject to modification and review <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not suitable <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Research Programme</p> <p><i>The extent to which the proposal meets the highest international standards of current research. High performance against this factor will indicate a project of the highest standard, competitive with the best activity anywhere in the world. The extent to which the application is particularly appropriate/novel at the present time, or offers longer-term benefits over and above the direct value of the research. Examples of timeliness factors include addressing a subject of pressing topicality or intense international competition or exploiting a “window of opportunity” available for a limited period.</i></p> <p><i>Will answer important questions in the field and result in a high quality PhD thesis and outputs OR likely to advance the field and result in a high quality PhD thesis and outputs</i></p>	<p>Approved <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Approved subject to modification and review <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not suitable <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Training Potential</p> <p><i>This should include reference to both project-specific and transferable skills. Where there is a requirement for project-specific skills how are these being</i></p>	<p>Approved <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Approved subject to modification and review <input type="checkbox"/></p>



<p><i>provided? Is there expertise in the supervisory panel to deliver required training? Is training required appropriate to PhD level study?</i></p>	<p>Not suitable <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Comments: Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Progression and Transfer Assessors</p> <p><i>Are suitable internal assessors identified from SETU staff?</i></p>	<p>Suitable: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Not suitable: <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Overall assessment.</p>	<p>Approved for recruitment <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Approved subject to modification and review <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Declined <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Additional Feedback/Comments:</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

## Appendix 5: Recognition of Prior Learning Application Form for SETU Research Postgraduate Programme

### Form RP5 (RPG): Application for a SETU Research Postgraduate Programme Utilising Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)

*Please type this form.*

1. Personal Details		
If you have ever been registered for a course in WIT/ITC/SETU please quote your ID number:		
Personal Public Service Number (PPS No.)		
Family name:	Forename(s):	Title:
Gender:	Date of Birth:	Age:
Permanent Address:		Address for Correspondence:
Telephone:		Fax:
Mobile Phone:		Email:
Country of birth:		Citizenship:

**2. Title of Award Sought**

MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	MBS	<input type="checkbox"/>	MEng	<input type="checkbox"/>	MSc	<input type="checkbox"/>	PhD	<input type="checkbox"/>
----	--------------------------	-----	--------------------------	------	--------------------------	-----	--------------------------	-----	--------------------------

Are you applying as a full-time or part-time student?

Please indicate the name of any SETU staff member who has helped you with this application:

### 3. Higher Education

List here all higher-level education you have received, including incomplete programmes of study, since you left primary/secondary school.

From: mm / yyyy To: Mm / yyyy	Institution	Final Year Subjects	Qualificati on  (BA, BSc, etc.)	Precise Category/  Grade of Award	Date of Conferral

#### **4. Relevant Work Experience**

List here all professional experience you have had since leaving primary/secondary school.  
Please give dates and details of responsibilities where possible.

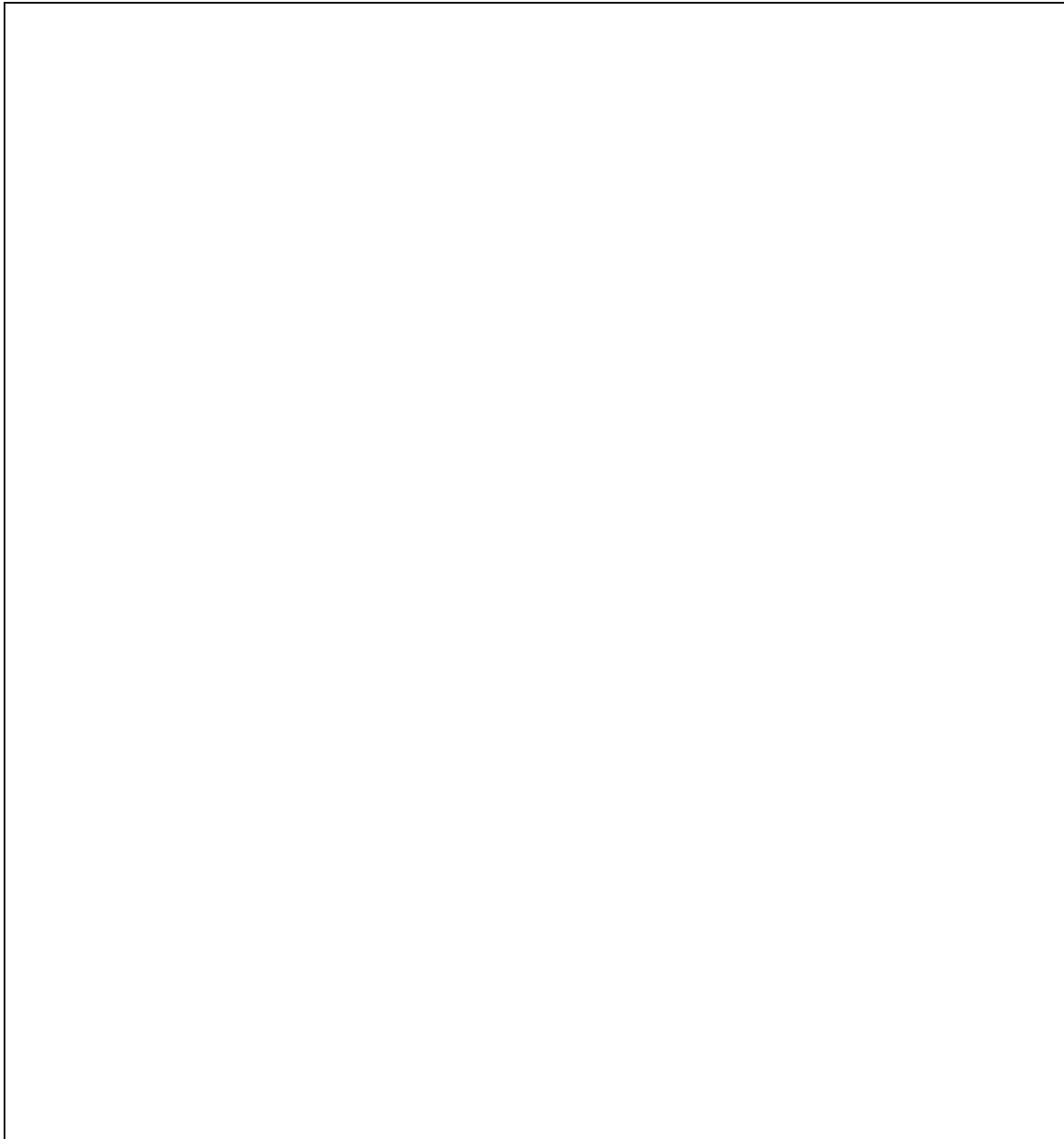
**6. Other experience**

Please list other experience— for example voluntary / community work or sporting or academic achievements—that may be of relevance to your application.

## **SECTION 2: Learning Claims**

### **6. General Statement**

In no more than 1000 words, please state your case for admission to this research postgraduate programme by RPL.



## 7. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes describe the kinds of skills, competencies and knowledge that a graduate of a particular programme of study is expected to have acquired. Admission to a postgraduate programme at SETU (levels 9 and above on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications) presumes the achievement of the equivalent learning outcomes of a level 8 (or Honours Bachelor) degree. In the case of EACH of the following, please indicate how your combination of professional experience, education and other experience equates to the achievement of the learning outcomes proposed.

	<b>Level 8 learning outcome</b>	<b>Indicate how you have achieved this outcome through a combination of your education, professional and other achievements</b>	<b>Indicate clearly the evidence in support of your claim in respect of this learning outcome</b>
1	An understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning.		
2	Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialised areas, some of it at the current boundaries of the field(s).		
3	Demonstrate mastery of a complex and specialised area of skills and tools; use and modify advanced skills and tools to		



	conduct closely guided research, professional or advanced technical activity.		
4	Exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resourcing.		
5	Use advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for all related decision making; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills in a range of contexts.		
6	Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups.		
7	Learn to act in variable and unfamiliar learning contexts; learn to manage		

	learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically.		
8	Express a comprehensive, Internalised, personal world view, manifesting solidarity with others		

**8. Further Information**

Please furnish any further information that may support your application.

**SECTION 3: Index of Evidence**

<b>9. Index of evidence documents</b>		
Document title	For Office Use	
	Original verified YES /NO	Signed & Dated

**10. Formal declaration**

Name:

I hereby submit my application for admission to the above programme. I declare that the information contained in this application and all supporting documentation is a true and accurate reflection of my prior learning.

I accept that any advice or instruction given to me by the University or its staff in the preparation of the application does not confer any entitlement to credit/exemption in respect of the modules above.

I enclose my proof of learning.

Signed:

Date:

Please print and sign this form, append to your postgraduate application form and upload to PAC or return to:

Research Postgraduate Admissions

Registrar's Office

SETU

**SECTION 4: For Office Use**

<b>11. Audit Trail</b>	
Date RPL application received:	
Application assessed by:	
Result:	
Result approved by:	

## Appendix 6: Researcher Development Needs Analysis (rDNA)

This form should be used to inform a discussion between you and your supervisory panel, reflecting on identifying areas of training and development you wish to focus on during your studies. This should be completed by the Learner first registers and on an annual basis thereafter to reflect upon your development during the monitoring process.

**Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Student ID:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Year of Programme:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Primary Supervisor Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

### Communication and Writing

Skill/Development Area	Confidence Level	Examples of any previous experience & Ideas for further development	Do you need Further Training?
	1 – 4 (High-Low)		
I am used to citing and referencing in a rigorous and correct way.			
I have experience in writing a 'literature review'.			
I am able to communicate my research effectively to a variety of audiences using my writing skills.			
I have the necessary English language skills to conduct my research and write my final thesis			
I am able to present and defend verbally my research.			
I have experience of presenting research at Conferences/Workshops.			

Skill/Development Area	Confidence Level	Examples of any previous experience & Ideas for further development	Do you need Further Training?
	1 – 4 (High-Low)		
I have the information technology skills necessary for my research project.			
I am familiar with identifying and using Library resources, including electronic sources.			
I have a good understanding of a variety of research methods, theories and techniques relevant to my research project and subject area.			
I have experience in setting targets and timescales for different stages of a research project.			
I have experience of presenting a plan of purposes, stages and outcomes of research.			
I am confident in critically analysing and evaluating findings and results.			

## Research Methods

### Ethics and Governance

Skill/Development Area	Confidence Level	Examples of any previous experience & Ideas for further development	Do you need Further Training?
	1 – 4 (High-Low)		
I have experience of submitting my work for ethical approval.			
I understand issues relating to privacy and confidentiality.			
Knowledge and understanding of Intellectual Property rights and processes which exploit the value of			



research, both commercially and for the public good.			
I understand issues relating to academic research integrity, e.g. plagiarism.			

### Impact

Skill/Development Area	Confidence Level	Examples of any previous experience & Ideas for further development	Do you need Further Training?
	1 – 4 (High-Low)		
I understand the need to work effectively in a team and how to engage in collaborative activity with the wider research community beyond my department.			
I understand how to get the best from the research student-supervisor relationship.			
I have knowledge and experience of how to prepare research for publication.			
I have experience of teaching and demonstrating.			
I understand how to make my research count (i.e. impact, outreach and knowledge exchange, civic engagement).			

## Employability and Entrepreneurship

Skill/Development Area	Confidence Level	Examples of any previous experience & Ideas for further development	Do you need Further Training?
	1 – 4 (High-Low)		
I have experience of preparing a CV, job application, & preparation for interview			
I understand the range of career destinations available both within and outside academia.			
I understand the need to network and maintain personal and professional contacts			
I understand how to develop a professional researcher profile in and outside academia.			
I understand the need for a set of skills, attitudes and behaviours to facilitate innovation, creativity and opportunism.			



## Appendix 7: Learner Annual Progression Monitoring Form

### Learner Progression Report

This form is to be completed on an annual basis by all Masters by Research and PhD research postgraduates learners registered at SETU.

The form is used as part of the annual progress monitoring process for research postgraduates, which is specified in §6 of the *SETU Graduate Studies Regulations and associated Code of Practice*.

The form and associated documentation should be submitted by the learner to the Graduate Studies Office three months before the end of each academic year for which the learner is registered. This form will be reviewed by a nominee of the Chair of the Research Programme Board within the relevant School/Faculty and discussed at the appropriate progression meeting.

#### 1 IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION

Name:

SETU Student ID:

Primary Supervisor

Department:

School/Faculty

Period Progress

Report Relates to:\*

Date Form

Submitted:

\*Research postgraduate learners report on a September to August, or on a January to December basis depending on the date of their initial registration.

#### 2 RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROGRESS

##### 2 (a) Research Plan Progress

Please include with this form a **copy of your current Research Plan**, as approved by your Research Programme Board.

Comment briefly on your view of your progress to date on your research work and whether it is in line with the objectives and schedule set out in your research plan. Also comment briefly on your plans for the research work between now and your anticipated completion date.

**Research Plan Progress (max. 1000 words)**

**2 (b) Training Plan Progress**

Please include with this form a **copy of your current Development and Training Plan**, as agreed with your Supervisory Panel.

Comment briefly on your view of your progress to date on your training activities and whether it is in line with the objectives and schedule set out in your training plan. Also comment briefly on your plans for any additional training between now and your anticipated completion date.

**Training Plan Progress (max. 500 words)**

**2 (c) Research Dissemination**

Please provide a list of research dissemination related outputs **since you commenced your research programme**.

**Peer-reviewed Publications**

**Other Publications**

**Conference / Workshop / Seminar Presentations; Performances; Exhibitions**

## Other Research Dissemination

### 2 (d) Ethical Approval

Have you previously required ethical approval for your research programme? If so please detail here if prior ethical approval is still valid, requires amendment or is no longer required.

If proposed work, not yet started, requires ethical approval please detail here the timescale and proposed process for achieving this.

### 3 ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

#### 3 (a) Teaching, Demonstrating and Other Duties

Please list any teaching or academic duties performed in associated with your position as a SETU research postgraduate learner **in the period since your last submitted progress form\***.

**Teaching, Demonstrating and Other Duties.**

\* Recipients of some scholarships are required to perform teaching and/or other duties

#### 3 (b) Resources and Support Services

Please provide your view of the resources and support services provided by SETU to support research postgraduates. Please provide any suggestions you may have for how these resources and support services could be improved.

**3 (c) Issues and Concerns**

Please indicate any issues or concerns in relation to any aspect of your experience as a postgraduate research learner in SETU that you would like to bring to the attention of the members of the Research Examination Board.

If there are comments you would rather raise in confidence than have addressed at the Research Examination Board please submit these separately to the Graduate Studies Office.

<b>Issues and Concerns.</b>
-----------------------------

**9 DECLARATION**

**The information provided in this form represents my opinion of the progress I have made to date as a research postgraduate learner in SETU. I am happy for this information to be considered by the members of the Research Examination Board in its determination of my progress.**

**Signature:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

Day	Month	year
-----	-------	------

## Appendix 8: Progress Report – Independent Review Form SETU

### Annual Progression Monitoring Internal Reviewer Report

<b>Name of Learner:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	
<b>ID:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	
<b>Programme Type:</b>	PhD <input type="checkbox"/> MSc <input type="checkbox"/>	Full-Time <input type="checkbox"/> or Part-Time <input type="checkbox"/> On-Site <input type="checkbox"/> or Off-Site <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Year of Programme:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	
<b>Primary Supervisor:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	

#### Guidance for reviewer:

To complete the annual progression review you should receive a Learner Progression Monitoring Report, and a Supervisory Panel Assessment.

Has the learner described work in their submitted report which demonstrates that overall satisfactory academic progress has been made towards completion of work which will form the basis of a research dissertation. Consider the presented research plan and the Learners evaluation of their progress against stated objectives and schedule. Has the Learner obtained exposure to opportunities for research dissemination?

Refer to Section 6 of the Graduate Studies Regulations and Code of Practice for further information and guidance.

**The internal reviewer is asked to RECOMMEND to the Research Examination Board ONE of the following as appropriate (final decision will be taken at the REB):**

- i) Satisfactory – whereby the REB deems the learner to be making sufficient academic progress to warrant continued registration.
- ii) Requires Improvement – whereby the REB requires the learner to significantly revise their research and/or training plans with updated deliverables and milestones and submit these for reassessment by the REB.
- iii) Unsatisfactory – whereby the REB deems the learner not to have made sufficient academic progress to successfully complete their research programme, thus not warranting continued registration for the current research award.



*Please use the comment box below to provide feedback to the Learner and a rationale for your recommendation above.*

<b>Reviewer Comments:</b>  Click or tap here to enter text.
---

Date of Review	Click or tap here to enter text.
Reviewer Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Signature:	Click or tap here to enter text.

## Appendix 9: Candidature Confirmation Form

### PhD Candidature Form.

Please consult the relevant sections of the Graduate Studies Regulations §7 and the accompanying Code of Practice §7 when completing this form.

Please type this form. A signed copy of this form should be submitted in electronic form to the Research Committee for ratification by Academic Council when the process is successfully completed.

#### 1 SETU SCHOOL/FACULTY & DEPARTMENT THAT THIS APPLICATION RELATES TO

School/Faculty:

Department:

Date Form  
Prepared:

#### 2 CANDIDATE DETAILS

##### 2 (a) Identification

i. Surname:

ii. Other names:

iii. SETU Learner No.

2 (b) Currently enrolled for:

Masters by Research	“Traditional” PhD	Structured PhD
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3 PROGRAMME INFORMATION**

**3 (a) Programme(s) Working Title and Timeline**

**Currently Approved Working Title of Research Programme:**

---

**Proposed New Working Title of Research Programme:**

---

**3 (b) Programme Duration**

**Mode**

i. **Full-time:**  **Part-time:**

ii. **Date of Initial Registration<sup>5</sup>**

Day	Month	Year
-----	-------	------

iii. **Indicative date for PhD  
Dissertation Submission:**

Day	Month	Year
-----	-------	------

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<sup>5</sup> The date on which the learner initially registered as a research postgraduate learner in SETU.

### 3 (c) Funding

Has the research programme(s) been approved for research funding?<sup>6</sup> Yes No

If so please provide the name and address of the funding agency or sponsor:

Funding agency / sponsor name:

Please provide details of the funding programme:

### 4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All SETU researchers, learners and staff, have a personal responsibility for meeting the ethical requirements in the conduct of their research. All research postgraduate learners should, in the first instance, refer to the SETU *Code of Conduct for the Responsible Practice of Research* and seek advice from the relevant Research Programme Board.

Researchers should also note that Garda Vetting clearance may also be required in cases where the research programme will involve placement in health or social care settings.

Where ethical approval and/or Garda vetting is required this should have been gained during the first year of the learner(s) registration as a research postgraduate.

We have considered the ethical aspects of the proposed research programme(s). Yes No

This programme requires ethics approval. Yes No

---

<sup>6</sup> Answer yes if the research programme(s) is/are associated with a research project that has, at the time of submission of this form, been approved for research funding. This may be through SETU or through an external funding agency or sponsor. Note that SUSI grants are not to be listed here.

**This programme gives rise to a Garda Vetting requirement.**

Yes

No

If ethical approval was required for the proposed programme of research a letter confirming the granting of the approval by the relevant ethics committee must be submitted with this form.

## **5 CONFIRMATION PROPOSAL**

Please submit your Confirmation Proposal together with this form. General guidelines on the content of the Confirmation Proposal are provided in the *Graduate Studies Regulations and Code of Practice*, but individual Research Programme Board may provide more specific guidelines based on the requirements and expectations within their discipline. The version of the Confirmation Proposal submitted must be the amended version in which any changes required by the PhD Confirmation committee have been made.

## 6 PROGRESS IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PLAN

As outlined in the *Graduate Studies Regulations and Code of Practice* all SETU research postgraduate learners are required to develop a Development and Training Plan during their first year of registration. The development and training plan will outline a range of formal and informal training in transferrable skills (such as research communication, research integrity and ethics, and research project management) and in discipline-specific skills.

All learners registered on a Structured PhD programme in SETU should aim to earn 30 ECTS credits in advance of submission of their Intention to Submit documentation in the final year of their programme. Of this 30 ECTS credits, at least 10 ECTS should be earned by completion of Universal PhD Path modules (which cover transferrable skills) and at least 10 must be earned by completion of Project Path modules (which cover discipline-specific skills).

Moreover, at the time of completion of submission of this form and associated documentation, a learner enrolled on a Structured PhD programme should have earned a minimum of 15 ECTS credits, of which 10 credits relate to completion of Universal PhD Path modules.

### 6 (a) Universal PhD Path Modules Completed<sup>7</sup>

Please list **accredited** Universal PhD Path (transferrable skills) modules that you have successfully completed to date.

Code <sup>8</sup>	Module Title	ECTS <sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> To be completed for learners registered on a Structured PhD programme only.

<sup>8</sup> Please provide the module code. The Graduate Studies Office can provide these codes as required.

<sup>9</sup> The number of ECTS credits earned for successfully completing the module.


**6 (b) Project Path Modules Completed<sup>10</sup>**

Please list **accredited** PhD Project Path (discipline-specific skills) modules that you have successfully completed to date.

Code <sup>8</sup>	Provider <sup>11</sup>	Module Title	ECTS <sup>9</sup>

**6 (c) Development and Training Plan Update Details**

**Is an update to the Training Plan agreed in Year 1 required?**

Yes  No

---

<sup>10</sup> To be completed for learners registered on a Structured PhD programme only.

<sup>11</sup> Indicate the Provider who will deliver the module. In most cases this will be SETU, however it is possible for SETU research postgraduates learners to access modules delivered by other providers in Ireland and elsewhere (contact the Chair of your Research Programme Board for information regarding the approval process for accessing external modules).

If an updated training plan is required please submit it together with this form.

## 7 SUPERVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

Has the PhD confirmation required any changes in the Supervisory Panel from that currently approved? Yes  No

If you answered “yes” please describe the change and outline the rationale for it:

## 8 DECLARATIONS

### 8 (a) Declaration by the Learner

I am satisfied with the proposed application and understand the duties and responsibilities of a SETU PhD candidate. have agreed to work with the proposed supervisory team. I have read the appropriate sections of the *SETU Graduate Studies Regulations and Code of Practice*.

**Signature of Candidate:**

---

**Date:**

---



**8 (b) Declarations by Supervisory Team Members**

I am satisfied with the proposed application and understand the duties and responsibilities attaching to the role of principal supervisor. I have agreed to work within the proposed supervisory panel. I have read the appropriate sections of the *SETU Postgraduate Research Degrees: Regulations and Procedures*.

**Signature of Primary Supervisor:**

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**Date:**

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If the composition of the supervisory panel has changed, section 7, then a signature is required for each departing or new member of the supervisory panel.

**Signature of Supervisor:**

---

**Date:**

---

**9 RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT**

Please outline any *changes* to the Research Environment since your initial registration:

- i. Space (Lab/Studio/Office).**

---

- ii. Equipment and Materials.**

---

iii. **Funding Arrangements.**

---

iv. **Library Resources.**

---

v. **Learning Support at Departmental or Research Group level.**

---

vi. **External Resources.**

---

**10 RECORD OF THE PhD CONFIRMATION REVIEW PROCESS:**

Date PhD Confirmation Proposal and Supervisory Team Statement of Support Sent to Graduate Studies Office:

Date of PhD Confirmation Interview:

**Membership of the Confirmation Committee:**

---

1.	<b>Chairperson</b> Name/Role/Dept:
2.	<b>Internal Reviewer</b> Name/Role/Dept:
3.	<b>Supervisory Panel Member</b> Name/Role/Dept:

If the PhD confirmation committee members recommended and significant changes to the Confirmation Proposal the Supervisory team must provide a letter stating that these changes have been accepted by the applicant and have been made in the version of the Confirmation Proposal submitted with this Form.

## **11 DECLARATION BY CHAIR OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME BOARD**

The Research Programme Board is satisfied that the proposed PhD research and training programmes can be successfully completed under the direction of the proposed supervisory team. The Board will ensure that the work is undertaken to the highest standards of research integrity and ethics.

**Signature of Research Programme Board Chair:**

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**Date:**

---

## **12 DECLARATION BY HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**

The department will undertake to supply such materials, support and guidance as will allow the applicant to complete the proposed programme of research. The department has ensured, to the best of its ability, that the information provided in this application form is correct.

**Signature of Head of Department:**

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**Date:**

---

## Appendix 10: Intention to Submit for Examination for Postgraduate Research Award Form

### Policy on Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s)

#### INTENTION TO SUBMIT FOR EXAMINATION FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD FORM

<b>Section 1: Candidate Details<sup>12</sup></b>	
Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Given/First Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Candidate Email Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Department/Faculty/Campus:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Supervisor(s):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Primary Supervisor Email Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Learner Signature:	Print: Click or tap here to enter text.  Sign:  Date: Click or tap here to enter text.
Supervisor Signature:	Print: Click or tap here to enter text.  Date:  Sign: Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Section 2: Dissertation/Submission Details<sup>13</sup></b>	
Award submitted for:	Masters <input type="checkbox"/>

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<sup>12</sup> To be completed by the candidate

<sup>13</sup> To be completed by the candidate (and supervisor(s))

	PhD <input type="checkbox"/>
	DBA <input type="checkbox"/>
Dissertation Title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
If accompanied by a performance or display/exhibition please provide details including nature of additional material and provisions for access by examiners <sup>14</sup> :	Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Section 3: Independent Chair Details<sup>15</sup></b>	
Title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Given/First Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Department/School/Faculty/Campus:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date last examination:	Click or tap here to enter text. Level 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 10 <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Section 4: Internal Examiner Details.</b>	
Title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Given/First Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Department/School/Faculty/Campus:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.

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<sup>14</sup> Details provided in initial candidate registration by Research Program Board

<sup>15</sup> To be completed by the Graduate Studies Office or Office of the Registrar

Date last examination performed:	Click or tap here to enter text. Level 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 10 <input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide details of relevant research experience to the dissertation under examination, e.g. publications, grants, projects:	Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>Conflict of Interest and Independence of Examination Process.</i>	
Was the examiner involved in the supervision of the learner in field or laboratory work or elsewhere during the program of research?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the examiner had substantial contact with the learner in any other circumstances that might jeopardise the independence of the examination.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the examiner possess a relationship with either the internal examiner or supervisor that may be viewed as a conflict of interest?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If YES to any of the 3 questions above please provide further details:	Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Section 5: External Examiner Details.</b>	
Title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Surname:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Given/First Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Work Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Current Position:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email Address:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Terminal Degree and date of Award:	Click or tap here to enter text.

Date last examination performed:	Click or tap here to enter text. Level 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 10 <input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide details of relevant research experience to the dissertation under examination, e.g. publications, grants, projects, hyperlink(s) to professional profile(s):	Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>Conflict of Interest and Independence of Examination Process.</i>	
Has the examiner held a substantive appointment at the SETU in the 5-yr period prior to submission of the candidate's dissertation?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Was the examiner involved in the supervision of the learner in field or laboratory work or elsewhere during the program of research?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has the examiner had substantial contact with the learner in any other circumstances that might jeopardise the independence of the examination.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the examiner possess a relationship with either the internal examiner or supervisor that may be viewed as a conflict of interest?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If YES to any of the 4 questions above please provide further details:	Click or tap here to enter text.

<b>Section 6: Signatures &amp; Approvals</b>	
<i>Graduate Studies Office</i>	Print: Click or tap here to enter text.  Sign:



	Date:Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>Research Program Board Chair/Head of Department</i>	Print: Click or tap here to enter text.  Sign:  Date:Click or tap here to enter text.
<i>Chair of Research Committee</i>	Print: Click or tap here to enter text.  Sign:  Date:Click or tap here to enter text.

## Appendix 11: Independent Chair Report

### Policy on Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s)

#### REPORT FROM INDEPENDENT CHAIR

#### REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF A *VIVA VOCE* EXAMINATION

1. This report is in accordance with Section 4 of the above Policy regarding the role of the Independent Chair.
2. You should submit this report on the conduct of the viva examination to the Office of the Registrar Awards/Examination and to the Head of Graduate Studies Office **within ten working days of the viva having been conducted.**
3. The report should include a report on any significant problems, which occurred in the *viva* examination (e.g. significant disagreement between the Examiners), or any general issues arising from it. In the event of significant disagreement between the existing Examiners, the Chair may recommend appointment of a third (External) Examiner.
4. This report will **not** be provided to the Candidate.
5. All sections of this form **MUST** be completed.

<b>FULL NAME OF STUDENT</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>LEARNER ID NUMBER</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>DATE OF <i>VIVA VOCE</i> EXAM</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.

#### **Details of Report (to cover where appropriate):**

#### **Before the viva:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Steps taken to ensure the Candidate's welfare:**

(e.g. agreeing to take a break during the viva as and when appropriate / provision of refreshments etc)

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Conduct of the viva:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Summary:**

Click or tap here to enter text.

Name and title of Independent Chair: Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature of Independent Chair:

Date:Click or tap here to enter text.

## Appendix 12: Initial Examiners Report and Recommendation Form

### Policy on Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s)

#### INDEPENDENT REPORT FROM EXAMINER

#### INITIAL EXAMINATION REPORT and RECOMMENDATION FORM

Before the viva voce examination, an independent initial report should be prepared by each Examiner. The report should include a brief description of the work carried out by the candidate. An Examiner is asked to make an initial recommendation to accompany the report, the report should be of sufficient detail to substantiate the recommendation. Examiners may exchange Initial Reports with each other before the *viva voce*. Each Initial Report Form should be completed electronically and a hand signed printed copy should be submitted along with the Joint Final Report and Recommendation Form to the Examinations Section within the Office of the Registrar **within ten working days from the date of the viva voce**. Examiners are reminded that under the terms of the Data Protection Act candidates are permitted to receive a copy of their examination reports and examination correspondence following a request.

<b>Candidate</b>	Choose an item.	<b>Learner Number</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Department/School/Faculty/SETU</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Primary Supervisor</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Title of Thesis</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>Award Sought</b>	<b>Masters</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>PhD</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DBA</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name of Examiner</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>Role</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Internal Examiner</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>External Examiner</b>	

**Report on Thesis**

Please give a brief introduction to the content of the thesis, highlighting any novel aspects of the work.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please comment on the candidate's standard of written English.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Examiners' Recommendation**

- Note: Suspected Plagiarism or Fabrication of Data in a Thesis Submitted for Examination
- Where one of the Examiners suspects a candidate of committing plagiarism or fabrication of data in a thesis, the
- External Examiner should liaise with the Internal Examiner, the Internal Examiner should liaise with the Head of Graduate Studies in the first instance.

The examiner is asked to make an appropriate initial recommendation from the following list.

1.  **Recommend the award of degree**

2.  **Recommend the award of degree subject to the Candidate making Minor Corrections, within 3 months, to the dissertation**

3.  **Refer the dissertation for modification by the Candidate, within 6 months, before award of degree**

---

4.  **Refer the dissertation for substantial amendment by the Candidate and re-examination, no more than 12-months from the date of the viva voce, before award of degree**

5.  **Not recommended for award of degree at Level 10 but recommend award of degree at Level 9 subject to, requirements below, being made to the thesis as agreed by the Examiners.**

**Please indicate as required:**

Minor corrections?  Yes   
 No

Modifications?  Yes   
 No

Substantial amendment?  Yes   
 No

6.  **That the Candidate be deemed not to have attained the standard required for degree at either Level 9 or Level 10 and that no further opportunity be allowed for examination**

Signature of Examiner		Date Click or tap here to enter text.
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## Appendix 13: Examiners Joint Viva Report and Recommendation Form

### Policy on Assessment of Dissertation and Research Output(s)

#### EXAMINERS JOINT VIVA REPORT and RECOMMENDATION FORM

Please complete the form electronically and submit a hand signed printed copy to the Examinations Section within the Office of the Registrar **within ten working days from the date of the viva voce**. Examiners are reminded that under the terms of the Data Protection Act candidates are permitted to receive a copy of their examination reports and examination correspondence following a request.

<b>Candidate</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Learner Number</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Department/School/Faculty</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	<b>Date of viva voce</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Title of Thesis</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		
<b>Award Sought</b>	<b>Masters</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>PhD</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DBA</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Primary Supervisor</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.		

**Report on Thesis.**

Have you any concerns about plagiarism, collusion or the fabrication of results?

Yes  No

Did the Graduate Studies Office indicate to the Examiners prior to the Viva that the candidate had made a claim for Extenuating Circumstances in Relation to the Viva?

Yes  No

Did the candidate raise any issues of concern during the Viva?

Yes  No

If the answer to either of these questions is 'Yes' then, without any breach of confidentiality, please describe briefly what consideration was given by the Examiners to the issues raised and any action taken.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please give a brief introduction to the contents of the thesis and identify any original research undertaken.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please comment on the candidate's standard of written English.

Click or tap here to enter text.



**Comment on the Viva Voce**

Please identify the topics discussed at the viva voce along with the Candidate's strengths in the given area of research.

You are also required to comment on the Candidate's performance during the examination.

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Justification of the Recommendation**

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Examiners' Recommendation

Examiners are requested to recommend one of the following. *Please select as appropriate:*

1.  **Recommend the award of degree**

2.  **Recommend the award of degree subject to the Candidate making Minor Corrections, within 3 months, to the dissertation**

*Please indicate who is responsible for the consideration  
and approval of the Minor Modifications*

Both Examiners

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

3.  **Refer the dissertation for modification by the Candidate, within 6 months, before award of degree**

*Please note that both examiners are responsible for the approval  
of Modifications*

4.  **Refer the dissertation for substantial amendment by the Candidate and no more than one further opportunity at re-examination, no more than 12-months from the date of the viva voce, before award of degree**

*Please note that in all cases of resubmission, a second viva must  
be held in order to allow the candidate to defend his/her thesis.*

5.  **Not recommended for award of degree at Level 10 but recommend award of degree at Level 9 subject to, requirements below, being made to the thesis as agreed by the Examiners.**

**Please indicate as required:**

Minor corrections?  Yes  No

Modifications?  Yes  No

Substantial amendment?  Yes  No

*Please indicate who is responsible for the consideration  
and approval of the Minor Modifications*

Both Examiners  
 Internal Examiner  
 External Examiner

6.  **That the Candidate be deemed not to have attained the standard required for degree at either Level 9 or Level 10 and that no further opportunity be allowed for examination**

## Examiners' Declaration

Please tick to confirm the following:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>That the Candidate was provided with informal feedback on their dissertation submission on the day of the viva voce</b>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>That the Candidate has been provided with a statement / list of any revisions required for completion. Please attach a copy of the revisions.</b>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>That a full copy of the Examination Reports will be sent to the Candidate's Primary Supervisor</b>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>That the Examiners' Initial Reports are attached.</b>
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Signature of Internal Examiner		Date Click here to enter a date.
Signature of External Examiner		Date Click here to enter a date.
Signature of Chair		Date Click here to enter a date.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>



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<sup>ii</sup> Beyond authorship: attribution, contribution, collaboration, and credit. *Learned Publishing*, 28: 151–155doi:10.1087/20150211